

HINTS TO SPEAKERS AND PLAYERS

ROSINA FILIPPI



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HINTS TO SPEAKERS AND PLAYERS

BY

ROSINA FILIPPI

AUTHOR OF

'THE HEART OF MONICA,' "INHALING

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EDWARD ARNOLD

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DEDICATED TO
FRED TERRY, Esq.

WITH GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCES OF THE
REHEARSALS OF "ROMEO AND JULIET."

DEAR MR. TERRY,

The first day I came to rehearsal of "Romeo and Juliet" I had a most dreadful shock; I felt you had either got access to the MS. of my book, or I had telepathically plagiarised all your views of stage work, so absolutely did you echo all I feel about it.

As the rehearsals progressed, however, I realised that in all the essentials of art there is but one Truth, which we all worship and acknowledge, only very few of us have the power to express it as you do.

I hope I have made this Truth clear in print; but whereas all I say of it is about as useful to my students as a pair of black silk mittens, you have the commanding quality of demonstrating it to the mind of your company through the medium of your wonderful rehearsals.

If it were possible that all young actors could come to you, the stage would be the better for so many finer artists; as it is, the few that pass through your hands

gain an intellectuality which years of study would never give them. You make them use their minds—and my experience of the young tells me what an achievement that is, for the average young man and woman studying for the stage brings to it brains that would easily fit into homeopathic bottles of aconite or nux vomica. I think that must be the fault of early education—that wholesale education that kills all individuality and yet brings no *esprit de corps*, no discipline, no broad outlook, no varied type. These products of modern schools always remind me of the machine-cut waistcoats in Manchester—two hundred right sides stamped out with one fell swoop, two hundred left sides with another, which, when sewn together, go all awry; but you make it impossible for their minds to go crooked: they must think straight, and the result is not only good acting but a bigger and truer outlook on life altogether; they acquire a loyalty to their employer, a love of their author, and an enthusiasm for work very rarely known among the subordinates of a theatre. So to you, dear Mr. Terry, I dedicate this book. You will see there are many things over which we cross swords, but they are only stage swords—flat-sided, which, when clashed together, make a very showy noise, but never wound.

I tried to write this book impartially for Church and State men, as well as for the stage student, but of course my heart is more in sympathy with my own branch of public speaking, and, on re-reading the letters, I feel like a very well-known Oxford Don, who gave a most interesting discourse from the altar steps on Aristotle,

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and when he had resumed his seat suddenly started up and said, "Wherever I used the name of Aristotle, please substitute the name of St. Paul."

Once more, thank you for the revelation your rehearsals have been to me.

Yours very sincerely,

ROSINA FILIPPI DOWSON.

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NOTE

In addition to the memorisations given, the following extracts from well-known works of famous authors may be effectively committed to memory :—

- I. "Love." From Addison's Essays (pp. 401 to 405). (George Bell & Sons.)
- II. "Love of Fame." From Addison's Essays (pp. 381 to 384). (George Bell & Sons.)
- III. "The Vision of Mirza." From Addison's Essays
- IV. (pp. 499). (George Bell & Sons.)
 "The Pulse." By Laurence Sterne. "The Works of Sterne" (pp. 87 to 94). (Cassell.)
- V. "Mrs. Battle on Whist." From Lamb's "Essays of Elia."
- VI. "Rejoicings on the New Year's Coming of Age." From Lamb's "Essays of Elia."
- VII. "Old China." From Lamb's "Essays of Elia."
- VIII. Extract from "David Copperfield." "Steerforth's Death." Dickens.
- IX. Extract from "Vanity Fair." Letters of Becky and Rawdon Crawley, to end of chapter. Thackeray.
- X. Extract from "Suspiria de Profundis" "Levana." Thomas de Quincey.
- XI. "The Last Lesson." From "Monday Tales" and "Letters from My Mill." By Alphonse Daudet.
- XII. "My Kepi." By Alphonse Daudet.
- XIII. "The Man with the Golden Brain." By Alphonse Daudet.
- XIV. "Monsieur le Sous-Prefet." By Alphonse Daudet.
- XV. "The Lovers." By Hans Christian Andersen.
- XVI. "The Mother of the Rothschilds." By Hans Christian Andersen.
- XVII. From "Kokoro"—"The Conservative." By Lafcadio Hearn.
- XVIII. From "Kokoro" — "The Street Singer." By Lafcadio Hearn.
- XIX. From "Kokoro"—"From a Travelling Diary." By Lafcadio Hearn.

HINTS TO SPEAKERS AND PLAYERS

PART I

LETTERS TO MY STUDENTS

LETTER I.

DICTION AND ELOCUTION

“Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounce it to you, trippingly on the tongue.”

MY DEAR SONS AND DAUGHTERS,

Fifty-two of you! My little pack, as I call you, and which I divide into Aces, Kings, Queens (and, alas! Knaves), and, lastly, little numerical pips: all embryo Kings and Queens, like the larvæ in a hive.

I have been asked to write a book on “Elocution,” but you all know what a horror I have of the word, which most of you pronounce as “Ella Kew-Shun.”

Poor Ella Kew-Shun! What a dull, uninteresting female she is! She presides over such poems as

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“Alaska,” “The Spanish Mother,” “The Purgatorial Pains,” “I am not Mad,” “The Ballad of Dreadful Silence,” &c.

I wonder what benefit can be derived from such terrible stuff? So, when I was first asked to compile a volume on Elocution, some years ago, “I lifted up my hands like a dear old injured ba-lamb,” and refused point-blank to have anything to do with it.

But now I am allowed to write to you personally, and make this more or less of a reminiscent chat.

To me, the whole epitome of the actor's art is contained in Hamlet's Speech to the Players; and I am going to take it in detachments—analyse it, bit by bit, with you—for I need it just as much as any of you. Helen Faucit, whom I had the honour of knowing, and who helped me times out of number when I was a girl, said to me once, “Learn Hamlet's Speech to the Players, and if you can follow it in every detail, with your brain and your heart, you will be”—what I have not become—“a great actress.”

To tell you the truth, it is too difficult.

It is all very well to say, “Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounce it to you, trippingly on the tongue.” That requires a good deal of work, a good deal

of understanding. At the back of every one of Shakespeare's lines there is a philosophy which is most difficult to master. It may not be the line itself that is so difficult; it is its inner thought interwoven in it.

"Ella Kew-Shun" knows nothing about it, and yet without very good elocution it cannot be said at all.

Before you can say it—*you* stands for all players, both great and small—you must master the rudiments of Diction.

I love Diction as much as I hate Elocution.

Diction is not a good word to use, but it is the accepted term for the study of the spoken word, and it is the mechanical means used in the speaker's art, as scales and exercises are in the musician's. Not only is it the study and mastery of words, but of each letter in the word, consonants as well as vowels, and also mute vowels.

My dear master, Herman Vezin, used to make me say words as if there were double consonants in them. Imagine what havoc it made in my spelling; for instance, in the word "Recognize" he used to make me say it as if it were written "*Rreccoggnnizze*." Say this word three or four times as it is written above, and now say "Recognize."

Now do you see the value of double consonants?

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Try the following words :—

Generally	<i>Ggennerrally</i>
Honourably	<i>Honnourrabbly</i>
February	<i>Ffebbrruary</i>
Library	<i>Llibbrrarry</i>

And how seldom you ever hear in omnibuses, trains, High Schools, and even on the stage or in the pulpit, anything but : “ generly,” “ honourbly,” “ Febuary,” “ libray.”

Mr. Seymour Hicks told me how he learnt elocution when he was a small boy.* A certain priest he knew used to come to the house, and taking out an orange from his pocket, he would ask—

“ What is this, my boy ? ”

“ An onge,” said the little Seymour.

“ No, try again.”

“ An ornge.”

“ No.”

“ An oringe.”

“ No.”

“ An Awnger.”

“ No, it is Orrrange.”

“ An orrrange,” said Seymour at last.

“ Quite right,” said the priest, and he would put the orange back into his pocket.

* Mr. Hicks tells this story himself in his own book ; it is differently put, but mine is the way he told it to me.

It was not an encouraging method, but it served its purpose, for Mr. Hicks is one of the cleanest speakers on our stage to-day; but of course we are going much too fast for pompous old "Ella Kew-Shun"; we must begin at the beginning, and the first rung is far more difficult; the purity of vowels is the first step up.

And Heavens! What a mess they are in at the present moment!

Do you know that every vowel has two sounds, and without these two sounds you get an accent?

In foreign languages there is but one sound to each vowel—at least it is so in French and Italian; I don't know any other languages.

I once learnt the Japanese alphabet; and though there are miles of letters in it, each letter has but one sound, all as minute and delicate in tone as the marvellous Japanese scale in their marvellous music (Lafcadio Hearn in his delicious book "Kokoro" describes it); but difficult as this alphabet is to learn, it is child's play to those wretched five vowels which dominate our English speech.

It is the vowels that give the keynote to our breeding; our origin is laid bare to the whole world by the use we make of them.

Oh! those vowels, what aristocrats they are! Sables and diamonds, motor-cars, and a big banking

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account won't help you, if they are not just right; and the veneer of Oxford won't help you either. Oxford may make you fit for the pulpit, may make a very good clergyman of you ; you may get a Double First at Oxford, but if your vowels are not pure (they are no purer by that ridiculous accent you affect when you enter the church), you might as well make a public confession in the pulpit that you are a plebeian and a common chap.

Therefore the first thing to work at is to get a purity of vowel sounds.

EXERCISE I.

"a"	is pronounced	a - - - - ēē
"e"	„ „	ēē - - - - er
"i"	„ „	i - - - - ēē
"o"	„ „	o - - - - ōō
"u"	„ „	ēē - - - - yew

Of course, I should like to be near you while you practise this exercise, because it is of no earthly use your saying it as if it were written :—

eye - - - - ee	ow - - - - woo
ee - - - - yer	ee - - - - yow
oi - - - - ee	

However, let us hope you are not going to say them as badly as that. We will *suppose*, for the

sake of argument, that your vowels *are* pure (it's a forlorn hope, but still it is as well to be optimistic in cases of this sort).

Now you must add consonants to these vowels. In France and in Italy children are taught spelling by diction.

It is a great pity that the English nurseries do not have the same system. You must therefore imagine yourself aged four and that you are beginning to learn to spell.

EXERCISE II.

B A Ba

B E Bee - ba - bee

B I By - ba - bee - by

B O Bo - ba - bee - by - bo

B U Bew - ba - bee - by - bo - bew

Repeat the exercise, substituting in turn for "B" the consonants D, L, R, S, and T.

You will find the full exercises at the end of these letters in detail.

In doing these exercises do not forget the doubling of the consonants. They will be of no use to you if you do not exert yourselves to do them properly; it is only waste of paper and print on the part of the publishers and of invaluable time on yours and mine if you do not really work.

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Once you have mastered these primary exercises thoroughly, you will have mastered the difficulties of the English pronunciation.

Now to put these exercises into practice.

EXERCISE III.—Double all your consonants, and keep all the syllables distinct in the following, as if you were hammering each syllable with a metallic hammer:—

PSALM: “*Blessed is the man that walketh not in the cow-oon-sel of the un-god-ly, nor stand-eth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.*”

Do not intone it, for though it is part of a psalm there is no need to set a singing inflection to it. By the way, I do not admit of learning “inflections.” The only way to get an intelligent variety of sound is to have a flexible voice and a flexible mind, and to get the first by mechanical means you should, in the “hammering process,” sing your syllable to a given note, beginning the first verse on “e” natural of the middle clef, second verse half a tone higher, third verse half a tone higher (“f” sharp), fourth verse half a tone lower, and so back to “e” natural.

The student must avoid using the musical note as a *singer*.

He or she must not "flute" the sound; it is a spoken sound, on a musical note. I have great difficulty with my singing pupils on this point. Although it is an exercise of Dupré's, the great singing master, it is *not* a singing exercise. He made his pupils speak first, and then sing.

As the student progresses, doing one psalm a day, he can increase his register of sounds. The directions given are for the female voice; the male voice has, of course, another note to start from, usually "b" flat, or even lower, going up three notes by the half-tone process.

But both in the male and female voice there is what is called the "middle register," and it is *that* register that requires strengthening in both voices, and which is the speaking register. Vocal registers are, of course, only mental gradations. There is in point of fact only *one* register. Indeed, the word register is a most inadequate one, as the production of *every* kind of voice, low, medium, or high, is precisely the same: but we shall come to that later.

By doing this exercise the student need not be worried with upward and downward inflections, though, of course, they exist. When he has mastered the difficulties of it he will have gained flexibility of voice. One thing more to remember is that elocution is not the study of anatomy.

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An actor is not required to know anything of his thorax, glottis, and other worm-like things in the bottom of his throat, or that his voice is a mechanical contrivance shut up in a long or short neck.

I remember that as a girl I could not pronounce the letter "m"; I used to say, "Oh, swear not by the boon, the inconstant boon, that nightly changes in her circled orb," and Mr. Vezin sent me to a voice producer, who, by the contrivance of electric light and many mirrors, showed me the inside of my throat. It was a horrible sight and did me no good, for I was preoccupied with the intricacies of my own throat, rather than the mental defect to which the spoken word answered.

If anything is wrong anatomically, let the actor go to a throat specialist, and if a defect of speech has to do with adenoids or too long a uvula, let him be treated for it by a doctor; but do not let him study and view his own throat in order that he may speak well.

To the speaker, his voice is the expression of his emotion, and he will not gain passion or tenderness by knowing that the inside of his throat goes through acrobatic feats to gain that expression.

It is as ridiculous as if a painter had to know

how his eye is set in its socket before he could paint the sky blue, or that Paderewski should know how many muscles and nerves are in the fingers with which he so divinely plays the Chopin "Barcarolle."

Having done his one psalm a day, the student should go on to another exercise in diction, and the following poems of Browning are most delightfully adaptive to it; he must say them as if he were marching to the order of Right, Left, Right, Left, and he should march to the time of the verse.

EXERCISE IV.

<i>Right.</i>	<i>Left.</i>
Kentish Sir	Byng
stood for his	King
Bidding the	crop-headed
Parliament	swing
and pressing a	Troop
unable to	stoop
and see the Rogues	flourish
and honest folk	droop
marched them	along
fifty score	strong
great-hearted	gentlemen
singing this	song

Etc.

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Accent on Words in Italics.

King *Charles* and *who'll* do him
right now King *Charles* and
whose ripe for *fight* now
Etc., to end of song.

The fourth section of Diction work is too difficult to treat in this method, as it requires personal tuition, but a splendid exercise in syllabic form is : " How they Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix " (Browning). It should be recited as though the reciter were galloping, and the gallop maintained right to the end.

Others are : " The Bells of Shandon " (Father Prout), here maintaining the swing of bells ; " How the Waters come Down at Lodore " (Southey), " Alexander's Feast " (Dryden), " L'Allegro " and " Il Penseroso " (Milton).

If you do these exercises daily, and properly, you will find that the speech has naturally come to the front of the mouth, where it ought to be, before going out to an audience.

You should by these have mastered the difficulties of diction ; your voice will have been strengthened by the psalm exercises ; you will have grasped the rhythmical value of syllables by the Browning poems, and you will no longer be content with

slurring over a single one of any word nor a single letter in any syllable.

Although the work has been mechanical, you will find that you have had to use a good deal of mental effort, and it is only by such effort that you will master the mechanical difficulties.

Of course, some people have a natural diction ; most foreigners have it. The foreign education develops expression, the English education develops *repression*, and this applies most forcibly to common, every-day speech. That is why the English language must be given to an audience in its purest form, for there is no outside help to be relied on. Gesture in England does not form part of the language—that is such a pity.

My next letter, I hope, will not be so full of technical and tiresome exercises.

Your affectionate

ROSINA MOTHER.

LETTER II

INFLECTION AND BREATHING

“But if you mouth it as many of our players do, I had as lief the Town Crier had spoke my lines.”

MY DEAR SONS AND DAUGHTERS,

“But if you mouth it as many of our players do, I had as lief the Town Crier had spoke my lines.” Yes, that’s a vile trick. That is where “Ella Kew-Shun” leads you astray—that is what *she* likes. Ah ! Ella ! Ella ! What a lot of harm you have done—that rounding of syllables, that making of a voice and listening to it with ears as large as Midas’ ! It is a disgusting habit, a provincial habit, the refuge of the untalented. It is so boring. It makes even the Bible unconvincing ; it empties Church and Theatre. It is a common saying that Shakespeare spells ruin ; it is the horrible way actors play Shakespeare that makes Shakespeare so unpopular. It is the horrible way clergymen read the Bible that makes so many schisms. I thought till quite recently that Elizabethans spoke as

Shakespeare wrote. I had no idea his characters spoke words in a poetical form, it always read so naturally. I was hardly aware of the feet in the verse. Like Monsieur Jourdain, who was so astonished when he was told that he spoke prose, so am I astonished that Shakespeare's characters speak blank verse. There is a set of students who declare that the feet of the verse must be marked. So do I say it. I even go further. I say Shakespeare's prose scans as well as his verse. So does Dickens's, so does Jane Austen's. But it is by the most subtle inflection that you must mark it, not by a sudden stoppage at the end of every line.

The quality of mercy is not strained—Stop.

It droppeth as the gentle rain from Heaven—Stop.

Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest.—Stop.

It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.—Stop.

'Tis mightiest in the mightiest ; it becomes—Stop.

The throned monarch better than his crown.—Stop.

His sceptre shows the force of temporal power, &c.—

Now this speech is capable of the most subtle treatment. It is no use mouthing it and detaching it from the scene because it is a set speech in an elocution book ; it is an answer to Shylock.

Says Portia : “ Then must the Jew be merciful.”

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And he answers with an outburst, "On what compulsion must I! Tell me *that?*"

And she says—astonished out of her impersonation of a young man of law by such a question:—

"The quality of mercy is not *strained*!!! It droppeth as the gentle rain from Heaven upon the place beneath.

"It is *twice* blest! It blesseth him that *gives* and him that *takes*. 'Tis mightiest *in* the mightiest. It becomes the throned monarch *better* than his crown.

"His sceptre shows the force of temporal power (the attribute to awe and majesty wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings)! But mercy is *above* this sceptred sway, it is enthroned in the *hearts* of Kings. It is an attribute to *God Himself*! And earthly power doth then show *likest* God's when mercy seasons justice," &c.

There is no earthly reason why this speech should not be written out in this manner, it scans perfectly if you know the rules of blank verse; but there is every reason why you should not *say* it in its blank verse form, because you make blank nonsense of it; pausing where there is no pause only dulls the sense and delays the action—you mouth the lines instead of saying them.

It reduces you to the level of that actor who,

playing the part of the Duke in the "Merchant of Venice" (dear old mouther he was), astonished the actors very much by saying the first and last lines of his speech, not having troubled to learn the intermediary ones. This is the sentence he rolled out in Court with all his elocutionary force:—

Shylock, the *worrrld* thinks, and *Oi* think so too!!!
We all expect a gentle *answerr*, *JEW*!!!

Personally, I think the audience had much to be thankful for in being spared sixteen more lines of such mouth gymnastics, but though it was rhyme, there was very little reason in it.

A play is a picture of life, and whether the characters speak verse or prose, it must sound as if those particular characters could say it in no other form than the one the author has given them. The sense comes first, the verse, if it is good verse, can always take care of itself. Don't bother to mark the feet, they will mark themselves if you speak the lines sensibly. There isn't a line of Shakespeare that won't scan. It is full of music. If you can improvise on the piano, play this speech of Perdita's:—

Sir, the year growing ancient—

Not yet on summer's death but on the birth of

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trembling winter—The fairest flowers o' the season are our carnations and streaked gillyvores—which some call Nature's bastards.

Of that kind our rustic garden's barren, and I care not to get slips of them—For I have heard It said there is an art, which in their piedness Shares with great Creating Nature—

I'll not put a dibble in the earth to set one slip of them.

No more than were I painted I would wish this youth should say
'Twere well—Here's flowers for you :

Hot lavender, mint savoury,

Margrom, the marigold that goes to bed with the sun, and with him rises weeping—These are flowers of middle summer and I think they are given to middle age—

Now my fairest friend I would I had some flowers o' the spring that might become
your

time of day—Oh Proserpina,
for the flowers now that frightened thou letst fall from Dis's waggon,
Daffodils, that come before the swallow dares, and take the winds of March with beauty; violets dim but sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes, or

Cytherea's breath; pale primroses, that die unmarried

ere they can behold bright

Phœbus in his strength; Bold

oxlips and the crown imperial,

lilies of all kinds, the flower de luce being one,

Oh! these I lack to make your garlands of,
and my

sweet friend, to strew him o'er and o'er.

It is the most delicious piece of music ever written, and yet for not one instant is its sense obscured by poetical license.

The same musical quality is to be found in Milton. His sense *orally* is obscure, therefore a more academic rendering of the lines is required than in Shakespeare—not counting, of course, the “Allegro” and “Penseroso,” where the lilt of the verse balances the mental pictures called up by each line; but for the most part Milton's sonority of language, spoken, represents more a wonderful piece of music played on some wonderful organ than poetry pure and simple. For Milton you require material adjuncts—a glorious voice and a special setting.

A little while ago I saw Milton's “Comus” given in Worcester Gardens, Oxford, by Mr. Philip Carr's company. It was a damp, cool evening in

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June; there was a slight mist, and the characters flitted in and out of the shadows of the trees. It was, to begin with, the most pictorial thing I have ever seen; it was mysterious and wholly beautiful. Then the characters spoke, and the music of the verse filled the veiled gardens, sight and hearing were wholly satisfied; the sense of the words did not reach to the understanding, but "The Lady," intoned so marvellously by Miss Tita Brand, stands out in my memory a sensation never to be forgotten; and that hurly-burly of malign spirits that rolled over and over in the mist, now in the darkness, now in full light at her feet, and the silent approach of the barge over the big, still lake at the back, with the white figure at the helm, was certainly the most beautiful scenic effect I have ever beheld.

If Shakespeare *must* be footed so rigorously, so independently of common sense, let it be played like "Comus," with all the adjuncts of *natural* scenic effects and spoken in sonorous, musical tones as "The Lady" by Miss Tita Brand. But I think Shakespeare can be treated as modern problem plays are treated to-day—quite naturally, without any mouthing, ranting, or fluting of the voice—all the characters are human beings. Even Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are perfect characterisations,

but I have never yet seen these two played as a couple of Danish gentlemen. Also please, please, tell me why the Ghost in "Hamlet" always speaks his lines with such sonority, such emphasis, such materialism, such opaqueness?

"'Tis geeven ah-oot, that shleeping in min
awchard—a shurpant scthung may."

It has been said that the part of Hamlet is actor-proof; so it is. It can't help being so, for Shakespeare has been too clever for "Ella." He foresaw the pernicious habit of an actor stopping dead on each line, by either bringing the sense to a close at the end of the line, or carrying the player on by an exclamation in the verse, and thus forcing him on willy-nilly.

This mouthing, however, is generally the mental outcome of the actor's devotion to "Ella." But there are also technical reasons for this unpleasant way of speaking: defective breathing; either the speaker who is ignorant of the art of breathing, rants, or he swallows up the ends of his sentences—I don't know which is worst; with the one, one hears too much, with the other one doesn't hear anything at all.

We are to suppose you now know how to pro-

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nounce your words with the full value of syllabic detachment. The next thing to learn is how many of those words you can say in *one* breath—that dreadful habit of breathing at every comma is utterly wrong. Remember a golden rule, whatever the actor does is repeated in the brain of the audience, and if you breathe at every comma your audience will breathe also, with the disastrous result that they will be worn out before the end of the first act. Your duty, therefore, is to breathe as seldom as possible. That perpetual breathing of the orator or lecturer brings on a spurious asthma in his audience, they can't take so many breaths quiescently without coughing. I had a pupil, a professor of —, who suffered from asthma, and he used to bring me his lectures the day before he gave them out at the schools. Poor man, he could not, owing to his illness, give more than four or five words out in one breath. I was tired out at every lesson. One day I went to hear him lecture. Besides a stupor that settled on all his hearers, the coughing was so loud, so persistent, so infectious, that it was quite impossible to hear him at all. His quick, sharp breaths, however, dominated all this noise like a great hydraulic engine. He panted, and puffed, and wheezed, and I came out of the lecture-hall dazed and stupefied, as if I had been shut up in an engine-

room out at sea in a terrible storm. I have been to the theatre where one would imagine every member of the audience came out of a consumption hospital. Moreover, continual and spasmodic breathing breaks the sense of the sentence, and it is on that that the speaker must concentrate his mind. Now here are a few sentences you must learn to say in one breath.

“Many a time and oft have you climbed up to walls and battlements to towers and windows yea to chimney-tops, your infants ‘in your arms, and there have sat the livelong day in patient expectation to see great Pompey pass the streets of Rome!” (*breathe*).

“And when you saw his chariot but appear have you not made a universal shout that Tiber trembled underneath her banks to hear the replication of your sounds made in her concave shores.” (*breathe*).

“And do you now put on your best attire?” (*breathe*).

“And do you now cull out a holiday?” (*breathe*).

“And do you now strew flowers in his way that comes in triumph over Pompey’s blood? Begone! (*breathe*). Run to your houses, fall upon your knees pray to the gods to intermit the plague that needs must light on this ingratitude.”

There is, of course, a mechanical method of

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breathing—the Swedes have taught us that—and the Easterns are past-masters in the art; the latter have cultivated it to exaggeration; a Yogi will breathe once in about fifteen minutes—it seems impossible, doesn't it? but I am told this is so. Regular long breathing is most essential to the public speaker. You, of course, know the right method of breathing—you should have been taught that in the nursery. You inflate the diaphragm. Singing masters of the early Victorian era, who knew little or nothing about anatomy, placed the diaphragm in the abdomen, and singers inflated the lower stomach till they filled the lungs with the breath and became enormous people. That is wrong. You would by this process merely enlarge your stomach as they did. The diaphragm is just below the ribs in front. Inhale a good long breath from there with your mouth shut. Keep your shoulders still, count six as you inhale, hold the breath quite steady, counting another six, exhale the breath slowly through your mouth, keeping the shoulders quite still, hold the breath, again counting six, now shut the mouth and begin again.

The Yogi commences by this method till he is able to breathe rhythmically without actually counting; it is always rhythmically done, inhaling, holding, and exhaling the breath with regular pre-

cision. He does it to enter into a state of unconsciousness in order that he may see visions. It is his way of gaining perfect health. He is master of the breath of life. The Swedes have adopted this method of breathing for practical Northern uses; and the speaker must learn to breathe in this regular cadenced way. To have full control over his voice he must have control over his breath.

We will suppose that his diction exercises in the first Letter will have brought his voice forward. Now he must keep it there *with* the breath. But although he may gain this method of breathing by the exercise I have quoted, it will be of no use if he does not apply it mentally. He must mentally visualise the length of the speech he means to give in one breath, and husband his breath till he gets it into the inflation he has allowed himself.

You may not think this important. "Ella" will tell you that commas are the breathing stops in a sentence, but that is wrong; you have only to watch people talking together and you will observe that they very rarely breathe in the middle of a sentence. You yourself will talk quite half a minute without breathing. Just fancy if when giving an order to your servant you breathed at every comma; what a lengthy tedious business you would make of it!

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Suppose you had to say the following to your servant :—

“ Mary, I am expecting some friends to dinner. There will be eight of us altogether, and I want the best glass used, and the silver that is put away in the silver cupboard. Don’t forget.”

That is not a very long sentence, but if you follow “ Ella’s ” instructions she would have you say—

“ Mary (*breathe*),

“ I am expecting some friends to dinner (*breathe*).

“ There will be about eight of us (*breathe*) altogether (*breathe*), and I want the best glasses used (*breathe*), and the silver (*breathe*) that is put away in the silver cupboard (*breathe*). Don’t forget ” (*breathe*).

I admit this is an exaggeration, but not a very great one.

Some time ago I had a personal experience of the value of a long breath. It was when I was playing in “ Arms and the Man ” the part of Catherine.

I had a speech at the beginning of the scene—
Act I. :—

“ He defied our Russian commander—acted without orders—led a charge on his own responsibility—headed it himself—was the first man to sweep through their guns. Can’t you see it, Raina? our

gallant, splendid Bulgarians, with their swords and eyes flashing, thundering down like an avalanche and scattering the wretched Servians and their dandified Austrian officers like chaff. And you !” &c.

and I knew that my effect would be made by holding the breath from “ He defied ” to “ And you.” It was not an easy matter, but I was sure I couldn’t get the big crescendo the speech absolutely required simply except by using one breath for it. There should be, I knew, a laugh from the audience to crown my efforts.

I had practised it a good deal, and mentally visualised the length of the speech and the amount of breath I should require.

The curtain went up on the first night. I was very nervous, and, alas ! very breathless. I had to have three breaths for my wretched speech, and the audience responded in no way.

Ever after, with no nervousness to hamper me, I got my laugh as surely and as regularly as the piece lasted.

How far voice producers are right in their methods I do not know. I have no experience whatever in voice production ; I don’t really know what it means. I don’t believe one man can produce another man’s voice. To me the entire work of

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an actor's art, both mechanical and emotional, is done by his own mentality.

A certain little pupil of mine once had to sing a song, and when the day of the concert came her mother, who was accompanying her, got panic-stricken with nervousness, and pitched the accompaniment several tones too high. The child started, and we all strained with anxiety, fearing she must break down, but she went on bravely, and took an impossible note at the finish as clear as a bell. When we spoke of it afterwards I asked her how she had done it. "I saw the toppest note in my mind and took it," she said quite simply. That is the secret of all achievement, being able to take the "toppest note." Voice production may be a very good method of developing a speaker's voice. I am bound to admit that in many cases wonders have been achieved, but I don't myself believe a speaker has any business to tamper with his voice by such means. The voice is such a mysterious, intangible thing—I suppose it has its materiality—it is, we are told, produced by certain structural anatomical formations of a throat. Short-necked people have stronger voices than long-necked ones. Southerners have richer voices than Northerners, Eastern people have sexless voices, Europeans have three or four different "registers" in the voices of both sexes.

We have the tenor voice, the baritone, the basso profundo, the treble, the alto, the soprano, the mezzo, and the contralto. There's the negro voice, the Assyrian voice, the voice of the man in the desert, the paroquet squeal of the woman in the zenana, the nasal twang of the American, and the voice of the sluggard, but all these different tones can, and do, come out of the very same sort of throat; there is no rule for the formation of a voice. The most powerful and the clearest voice that ever came my way was from a midget of four feet high, a girl of sixteen. She sings in the Drury Lane Pantomime; she is anæmic, she is very short—without exaggeration only four feet two or three—she has a short, thick neck, and no breathing capacity. She pants, and the veins stick out of her throat as she sings. Nature has done nothing for her but give her this wonderful, tender, full-toned voice; she sings absolutely naturally, and yet she is by nature hampered in every way. How would the voice producers treat such a case? All I could do for her was to teach her to breathe (for her own comfort), for she managed her short gasps so cleverly that no one at a great distance noticed how often she had to take breath. Of course I knew she was doing everything all wrong, but the effect was perfect. To me there is no law for voice production.

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There are rules, heaps and heaps of them, but they do not apply to every voice. One teacher of elocution I heard of told all her pupils that the only thing a girl need remember on going on the stage was to "be sweet." I don't agree. "Be natural" surely is better. If a girl remembers or is conscious of her own sweetness she "flutes" her voice and listens to it, and at once her voice is badly produced; but if a girl or a man is natural and listens to what the other person is saying on the stage, her answer comes out clear and the production is good. Of course the English language is difficult to produce clearly.

Personally I think a teacher should first hear the voice he has to deal with, and gradually, by the subtlest means, develop the individual organ he has in his care. Hard-and-fast rules for its "production" must be wrong.

I think the pupils I like to teach best in this particular branch of my work are children. With them the voice is fresh and sexless. By no "methods" it grows to a mellow tone without effort, the hideous child squeak disappears, the diction is good and sound, and the breathing is natural.

I have heard one of my children pupils fill the Coliseum with the most beautiful tones, where it

has been *impossible* for me to distinguish one word from another of the adult speakers who were playing with her; but I swear emphatically I did nothing to produce her voice. "It growed," like Topsy.

To return to the question of breathing, which is the fundamental basis of speech, the student must not only know how to breathe, but how to husband the breath.

Agreed that the process is mental, he will have to form a mental picture of the evolution of his voice from himself to his hearers. The voice must be in *front* of the breath, it must lean on it; the breath must not get in *front* of the *voice*; let the voice lean right back on it, push against it. Don't let the voice escape you till it has knocked itself up against your front teeth. There's a direction for you! but I can't give it to you more technically. All I can tell you is that all great speakers and singers use their voices in this way.

You must form a mental picture of your voice coming from your soul, from your heart, and passing to another's on the wings of the breath of life. If you do this you will be able to fill the Albert Hall (perhaps) simply, naturally, and without any strain.

Don't mouth your words, don't listen to your

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voice, don't drown it with an ungoverned breath. Just let the whole thing go, and it will be like a magnificent horse under magnificent control.

Your affectionate

ROSINA MOTHER.

LETTER III

GESTURE

“ Nor do not saw the air with your hand, thus—”

MY DEARS,

I do hope we have done with technical difficulties and that we may now go on to a more amusing method of instruction. At the end of this book you will find all the exercises in their progressive order, and I rely on you to do them regularly every day ; the most advanced of us need them, as the pianist or fiddler must do scales to keep his technique right. And you will find also that it is when you know how to do these exercises that you will enjoy doing them. The next sentence in Hamlet's speech gives more definite instruction, and I hope to make this clear to you. At present these letters seem only written to the stage aspirant, but that is not so really ; all I have told you about diction, enunciation, breathing, and voice production applies equally to the priest and the orator, and even this letter, which will deal principally with gesture and

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movement, is quite as important to the platform and pulpit speaker as to the actor; for what is more trying to listen to than a speaker whose movements are awkward and whose gestures do not fit the word?

“Nor do not saw the air with your hand, thus—”

In the first place, all arm gesture should come from the top of the arm, the socket. All leg movement from the thigh—that is a rule in rudimentary deportment. As a teacher I absolutely refuse to teach gesture *per se*, but I do give movements to study outside those which go with a recitation or performance of a part, and these are most necessary to follow.

EXERCISE I.—Swing the arms round and round loosely from the socket, get them unlocked at the top of the arm. Don't stiffen any portion of the arm, and swing them fast first until you feel the loosening begin, and then swing them round slowly, taking care not to stiffen any muscle.

EXERCISE II.—Stand in what is known as the fifth position in dancing, now throw out the leg *sideways* and bring the right toe down to the heel of the left foot, throw the leg out again and bring it to the fifth position. These movements are called *battements*.

Don't throw out the leg in front of you and at the back of you. Battements should be done from the side, keeping the body quite straight; by the way, you will have to hold on to a chair or a bar with your left hand to keep the balance of the body. Now reverse the position of the feet and use the left leg as you have the right.

EXERCISE III.—Stand in the first position—heel to heel and the toes turned well out—now go gradually down in a sitting position, *not* taking the heels off the ground. These are called *pliés*—very nasty things and painful; they hurt the calves of one's legs abominably, but these *pliés* must be done that way; it is no use to raise the heels off the ground—anybody can do that—and you will not gain balance unless you have full control over all your muscles, and those in the calves of one's legs are the most important. You won't go down much more than an inch the first time you do them, for besides keeping the heels well on the ground, your knees must spread out to the sides as you come down. Don't sit with your knees in front of you. Get them to the side, turn them out in the same direction as your toes. This is the most trying of the exercises but the most important for loosening the limbs.

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EXERCISE IV.—Stand in the first position, raise your arms over your head and lock your thumbs together. Now bend the *body*, but not the knees, and touch your toes with your fingers. This is a most satisfactory exercise, and you will feel supple and loosened in every limb after it.

These four exercises form the groundwork of all gestures and all movements; of course, if you do them stiffly in military fashion you might as well swallow a poker and get on to a pair of stilts. These exercises are to loosen your limbs, not stiffen them, and if you stiffen any of the muscles while you are doing them you only do yourself harm.

I don't know which I should advise you to study if you can only take up one study—fencing or dancing. Stage dancing is of course invaluable, provided you go to a good master, and there are splendid masters, only most of the modern stage dancing is so frightful. The Russians have shown us what good dancing is, however, and Mr. Mordkin is perhaps the most wonderful mover that has ever been seen. His Bacchante dance is a lesson in itself. He rushes in with Madame Pavlova with his knees flexed and rising almost to his nose, and yet every movement is from the thigh. If that same dance is done from the knees it is too hideous for words. The movement of the knee

should be a curve, not used as the propelling action of the leg. The propelling *must* come from the thigh-bone. And for girls, this is most important—the audience should *never* see the inside of your dress ; if the leg goes boldly out from the thigh you may yet do high kicks and offend no one ; raise your foot but nine inches off the ground, making your movement from the knee, and your dance becomes ungainly and immodest. The Bacchante dance is wild and most suggestive, yet never for one moment is one hurt or offended. It is artistic and very dramatic. Mordkin is a wonderful actor—what a Romeo, what an Othello, what a Hamlet he can be in turns ! What a Sir Galahad and what a Mephistopheles ! and imagine what *his* breathing capacity must be ! You never see him pant, he is just as cool mentally after his wildest dance as before it, possibly more so ; a great work has been achieved and he takes his repeated calls radiantly.

Still, there is but one Mordkin in a century, and the parson and Member of Parliament would not benefit much by an intemperate use of the exercises which make up the dancer's perfection. Fencing, on the other hand, is almost an essential to the male speaker and of the greatest service to the actress—even more than dancing. It gives balance, flexibility, and strength. Here the movements *must*

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be done from the arm socket and the leg socket. It is a better continuation of the primary exercises, and nearly all the fencing schools are good. The French school is the neater, the Italian the stronger. Both develop quickness of the brain. A good fencer is always on the alert, and it gives him agility of movement.

It is all very well, however, to learn these different forms of body culture, but to the actor it does not suffice only to be supple, neat, and on the alert. He must put these movements into practice. If he is going to study like the foreign actor, and give up four or five years to perfecting his art before he presents himself to the public, there are hundreds of ways to get ease of deportment; but in England, where the stage is looked upon as the refuge of the destitute, a means of making an immediate fortune, or of bringing to light a God-sent genius, and where a six months' training is considered quite a sufficient amount of time to give to the most difficult of all the arts, one must as a teacher make the student's way as easy as possible, and trust to a not over-critical audience to finish his education for him.

Let him now do this exercise. He must write in the air as slowly as possible an imaginary alphabet in capital letters as big as himself, beginning the

base of the letter at the full stretch of his arm, and saying the letter he is writing in one breath—

A - - - - -

As the movement of the letter rises above his head he must increase the volume of sound—

A - - - - B - - - - C - - - - D - - - - E - - -
F - - - - &c.

This exercise is most difficult to describe on paper, but try it all the same—never lose sight of the hand with which you write your letter. Your head will in this way get a movement also, and your bearing will grow easy. It is a mistake to do head exercises by themselves, as to do them well you must stiffen the muscles of your neck, and my object is to get all stiffness out of the body, not put it there. This writing exercise is chiefly for the head and neck, and you will do more in one day by it than you will in a month of the other stiff head exercises taught in physical culture schools. Mind, the physical culture methods are excellent if you have time to forget you have ever learnt them, but you young actors are too impatient to begin to act to give the necessary time to working your art properly in all its more lengthy methods.

There is also a most beautiful exercise on

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Longfellow's "Keramos," and another on "The Brook" by Tennyson, too complicated to describe in detail but to which I would nevertheless refer you if you wish to practise gesture, breathing and flexibility of movement. They are the essence of grace; I have known the most awkward person develop into quite a graceful mover by the working of these two poems alone—and the alphabet. These are the only methods I use to teach gesture, and I found them out for myself when I was a numerical pip. Mr. Vezin's teaching consisted in his sitting in an arm-chair, his pupil in another. He first read a scene, and his pupil read it afterwards. I went three times a week to him, three times a week to a fencing school, three times a week to a dancing mistress, and three times a week to the swimming baths in the summer for three years, and one day I suddenly went to Mr. F. R. Benson and played "lead" with him. I can't tell you how or why I was ready to act, but I was. I sat in my chair opposite Mr. Herman Vezin for three years, and then he said I was ready to act, and I acted, but I should not dare use the same system with any of you. In the first place you would not have the faith in me I had in Mr. Vezin, and you would be perfectly justified. He compelled confidence, but you want to act now at once, before you can speak,

or walk, or breathe, or move—you won't work out your three years underground. You all want to be full-blown perennials before you are even seeds. "Art is long," my dears—very long; but it is eternal also, and three or four years given to the study of it is not a very great deal. You make the teacher's work most awfully difficult. You hurry us. How often you come to us and ask us "How long will it be before we are ready for an engagement?" You mean "how soon," not "how long." We patch you up, put a coat of varnish on you, and you look to be quite clever when you perform under our immediate care, but when you are on your own, how few of you can keep your heads above water! You don't know enough.

I can't describe to you what the sensation was of climbing up those narrow little steps of Mr. Vezin's flat three times a week in rainy weather and sunshiny weather alike, and having that hour with him, full of the most interesting work, analysing, arguing, disputing, looking up different authorities to substantiate both our opinions. I didn't want to "act." I was *living*. You think that learning the words of a part constitutes the study of the character—it is only a mechanical boredom. Words are the bane of an actor's life; words stop action, and his own imagination will often supply better

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words than his author—I am not speaking of the classics. The classics have outlived the actor, and the classics are so perfect no other words are admissible; but in the stuff one is usually called on to speak the sentences are sometimes so ill-balanced that it is impossible to say them at all, and the characterisation depends entirely on the actor's art, not only his conception of the part in question, but in his knowledge of human nature, his observation of every-day life, his technical knowledge of history, geography, the classics, his inborn love of the sister arts. How can you hope to learn all that in six months? And without this knowledge how can you ever hope to play Queen Catherine if you do not know not only her personal history, but the history of the times she lived in? How can you hope to play Wolsey if you know nothing of the papal power of Wolsey's day? Or Bassanio, if you know nothing of Venice, and of the different lives lived at that epoch, the Eastern and Western mind conflicting in commercial interests—all this is part of an actor's education, or should be; and as this rule applies to the impersonation of characters in the classical drama, so much more is it necessary in modern work. The antecedents of a modern character must be mentally understood; no human being ever comes into one's

life as a bolt from the blue, there are always the chains of ancestry behind him, and to get into the bones of the character you play you must throw back to at least two generations, and for that the knowledge of history and geography and the classics are as an open book to the study of the modern man; but all this is a terrible digression from what I started out to say on this subject of gesture. So let us return to our muttons.

Gesture must be free—from the shoulder—and it must have meaning. The priest should study gesture as much as the actor. It is no use his beating his cushioned pulpit—the cleaners will do that for him. It means absolutely nothing—it doesn't even mean emphasis, for the man who resorts to such methods invariably emphasises the wrong words. I heard a clergyman preaching with the following emphasis: "I do not speak (bang) this from my own knowledge, but from (bang) my faith. I know that (bang) it is the Divine," &c., &c.

Also should the orator study gesture. How often has a good speaker marred his speech by some little trick of gesture! He will sometimes shoot out his arm as if it were a signal on a railway line, sometimes he will let his arms dangle down by his side as if they were made of rag instead of bones

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and sinews. One famous speaker holds both hands up as if he were a big dog sitting up to beg.

Of course to me the orator and preacher should use hardly any gesture at all, but he certainly should have ease of bearing, and to them both I would advise a very careful training in fencing.

Your affectionate

ROSINA MOTHER.

LETTER IV

THE CONTROL OF THE VOICE

"But use all gently ; for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness."

TO MISS E. H.

MY DEAR E——,

I can't resist writing a personal letter to you upon the advice given by Hamlet. I am sure he prophesied your coming when he wrote it. You are certainly one of the few to whom I have never had to say "Speak up," but our work, on the contrary, has ever been to "acquire and beget that temperance" of which, when you choose, you are past-master.

Heavens! how we have worked to get a noisy speech into a concentrated form, to have its essence and strength, and yet to keep it well within control! You have *never* ranted, but you have often spoken too loud—a fault that is almost a virtue in this age of indistinct speech—and it is a great sign of physical health and strength, but it is

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not a sign of dramatic or intellectual strength, it merely argues a strong constitution—a power to climb hills, trees, mountains, a power to row on a rough sea, to swim a test match ; but the greatest strength of the speaker lies in curbing his voice and guiding the volume of sound. I believe in your heart of hearts you have a great contempt for reservation, for even now I often see you rush with vocal prowess into a scene to “keep it up,” as you call it ; even now you sometimes take the bit between your teeth and go at a break-neck tangent, and by sheer physical power will bring a speech to a successful issue ; but that is not dramatic strength. Some scenes, some plays are grey tinted, and require a dash of scarlet ; when that is the case by all means put the scarlet in, but put it *inside* the frame, not outside it.

One thing certain is, no anæmic person can ever be a *great* speaker (you, thank God, are not anæmic). He *must* have physical power to start with, but the stronger he is, the sounder his constitution, the more he must control it. It is a fire within a furnace, to be kept alive by constant stoking, and it must not be the conflagration of an oil-shop.

There was an actor in my young days—Coghlan—who was noted for his “concentrated passion.” He

was very wonderful, and could get every bit of passion out of a scene with hardly a movement, hardly a gesture; he never dropped out of the scene, he never started out of it, yet he always dominated it. Very few of us have that gift, but he had to a most pleasing extent; you felt so safe with him, you knew he would never disappoint you. Kelly had it too, Irving not at all. I wonder if it is a sacrilege to say so? Irving was so great, such a master, such an artist, such an imaginative spirit, and when he had to play a quiet scene no one living or dead could hold the intensity of absolute stillness as he did, but when he had a big passionate scene it seemed to go into thin air. He did not rant, never for one moment, but he hadn't the physical strength to give the speech its full power without an effort to "keep it up," and it was that effort that he made which lost him the power of expressing passion. One man alive to-day has this power in a different form to Coghlan, but equally sure, safe, and physically reliable, and that is the Sicilian actor Grasso. He beats us all at the game of temperance and smoothness "in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, whirlwind of passion"; no matter what the passions are—and they are pretty varied in his repertoire of plays—he *always* has control of speech, movement, and emotion.

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Now can this be acquired? I doubt it; but there are mechanical means to make use of provided in the very depths of your soul; you have the true emotions of life, and in the marrow of your spine the primeval energy and strength of a long line of healthy ancestors.

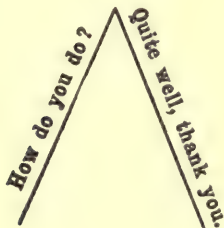
To every speech there is a pyramidal apex; it is on that apex you must fix your mind; it is no use going for it at the altitude of the apex itself, you must begin at its basis and rise to the top and gently drop down again; whether it be in comedy or in tragedy that apex is always there, and there is no getting at it except from its root.

your infants in your arms,

Many a time and oft have you climbed up to walls and battlements, to towers and windows, yea, to chimney-tops, and there have sat with patient expectation to see great Pompey pass the streets of Rome.

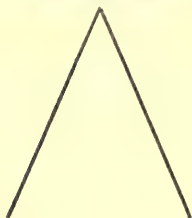
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That is the absolute form of every speech : even the simple formula of “How do you do?” is—

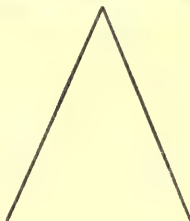


It isn't—

How do you do?—



Quite well, thank you.



That is the only form and pattern of our English language, it is a conventional pattern, as conventional as the design of a wall-paper. Now the Greek drama is not on this pattern at all. Greek dialogue is curved in sound and cadenced by a pendulum action of speech, thus—

Thy hand is clean, O child, from stain of blood?

My hand is clean, but is my heart, O God?

Some enemies' spell hath made thy spirit dim.

He hates me not that slays me, nor I him.

Theseus the King has wronged thee in man's wise.

Ah! could I but stand guiltless in his eyes.

You will say that I am contradicting what I said in a former letter on inflection. I am not at all. I mean inflection *per se* cannot be taught, but a flexible voice will use inflections naturally, and the

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natural inflection in the English language is pyramidal, and in the Greek it is rounded and cadenced, and almost monotonous—in fact, it is only by emphasis that you get the verse varied; but then the Greek actors had such a comparatively small stage to work on. There was no room to build pyramids of speech.

The principal actors had but a few feet of stage on which to enact enormous tragedies—their action was entirely emotional, not physical. It appealed to the mind, not the senses. Not so the chorus; they had space for movement. Their speeches in all the tragedies are poetical, rhythmical, philosophical. In them you get physical illustrations, and the iambic form, in whatever variety, lends itself most sympathetically to movement. The chorus in the Greek drama was used much in the same way that we use incidental music in our melodramas. It was an accompaniment to passion. It gave colour, action, vitality to human emotions, and when we are allowed to see a Greek play, produced much in the same way that it was in Euripides' day (minus the masks and stilts), we get revelations of voice effects. Give space, action, movement, inflection to the *principal* actors and cramp your chorus, you lose the human note and get the whole drama out of focus. It has lost its temperance, its smooth-

ness, its whirlwind of passion, for in Greek tragedy the four winds of heaven are let loose, and the temperance of the *action* gathers them into one great intellectual harmony, utterly unknown to the modern methods.

Now Greek tragedy and Shakespeare are fine studies for the speaker, but in them the emotional note may be too highly pitched for such a one as you, whose emotions require curbing. The study of the Bible, only, will give you that intellectual government of voice, and control of the great physical strength you possess. Certainly there is no lack of drama in the stories of the Old Testament, no lack of colour in the pictures they evoke, but its form is so majestic that I defy the most violent speaker not to cadence his voice, maintain its sonority, and keep passion under absolute control. To you especially I would advise that you learn—

The First Chapter of Genesis.

The First Chapter of Esther.

The First Chapter of Ruth.

The First Chapter of Job.

And above all others, the First Chapter of Isaiah. There is no finer word study for preacher, actor, or orator than those chapters, alone, out of the hundreds of others I could name to you. When you have learnt these and said them with all the variety they

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possess, turn to St. Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians and to the Romans. There is nothing to compare to the wording of these; they might have been written to-day, so full of vitality are they.

It maddens me to hear the Bible read in church; understand me well, I do not ask for a *theatrical* rendering of the Bible, I want an intellectual appreciation of the language. I want the music of the words, the cadence of the verse, the form, sonority, power, variety of the phrase. All this can be obtained from the Bible. Think of the first two verses in the Book, can anything be more wonderful than their wording?

“In the Beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the spirit of God *moved* upon the face of the waters.”

Then again can anything be more tender, can anything be more imaginative than the line, “He made the stars also.”

There isn't another language in the whole of the world that can compare with English. It is not a language to sing in, I must admit, but it is the language of human love and Divine communion.

Neither Omar Khayyám, nor the Koran, nor anything that has ever been written can compare with the Song of Solomon :—

“Set me a seal upon thy heart as a seal upon thine arm, for love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave.”

“Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.”

There is passion in both these verses, no matter whether applied to the Church of Christ or to a human being; but even you must give them temperance and smoothness, you can't help it—the words, the form, the balance of the verse keeps you in check, while at the same time the emotions are given full range.

Then in Psalm xi. there is a verse so imaginative that unconsciously your mind is on a level with the Almighty's at the very start :—

“In the Lord put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, flee as a bird to your mountain?”

I wish I were quite English as you are, for the Bible is a wonderful possession—no other country has it. I wish I had the making of bishops and judges, as well as of Garricks and Siddonses in

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embryo, I should not rest till they “used all gently, in the very torrent, tempest, and whirlwind of passion they should acquire and beget temperance that should give it smoothness.” But alas! there is a conventional school with the Lights of the Church as well of those of the stage. On the one hand the Bible is read as if it were a book of prescriptions, a book of recipes, a book of reference—on the other it is not read at all.

Reform altogether, do not only read it, dear E., but learn it “by heart,” then I think you will grow to be a great actress. I am very proud of you as you are, but I want you better, more temperate, smoother, gentler, and stronger—yes, E., stronger; at present your strength is expressed by physical effort. I want your strength to come from intellectual suggestion.

Yours affectionately,

ROSINA MOTHER.

LETTER V

RANTING

"Oh! it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags; to split the ears of the groundlings, who for the most part are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows and noise. I would have such a fellow whipped."

TO A NOW ACTOR MANAGER—ALSO TO EMMA
AND TO A PRIEST.

MY DEARS,

Ranting is almost dead, but there are a few left on the stage and a *very* small handful of people in the pulpit who still "tear a passion to tatters, to very rags." This is a most foolish fault, for besides being a great tax on the audience, it is of inestimable harm to the speaker. He *must* inevitably end by losing his voice altogether. The ranter should certainly be shown the inside of his throat; photographs of his wretched vocal chords should be pinned inside the covers of his part, his sermon, his church service, his brief.

Throat specialists make a fortune by these

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ranters. I know an actor who has to have his throat sprayed every time he goes on the stage, and a glass of Wincarnis after every exit. He not only tears a passion to rags and splits the ears of the groundling, but sends a vibration through his own vocal chords that blurs his sentences and wrecks his whole system. Now the voice is not a delicate instrument; it is made for wear and tear, but not for stretching to breaking-point. How you would scream, my dear Emma, if your limbs were stretched out on the rack, and yet that is what you do to your voice every night of your life—you simply rant.

You, my dear F., who are such a lover of the beautiful, how sick it would make you if you caught a glimpse of your own throat in the middle of one of your speeches. It is a truly ugly sight—you, too, simply rant.

You, oh! Rev. J. V., who preach moderation, gentleness, love of your neighbour, how shocked you would be if you knew that you are murdering the Holy Ghost. For your voice is the holy messenger, the echo of *God's* own voice, and you make it sound like a cornrake as it bashes itself against the pillars of your beautiful church. You suffer from a "clergyman's sore throat!"—my dear friend, you simply rant.

It is the general belief that it is easier to take away from a voluminous piece of stuff than to add to a too narrow one ; that is a fallacy. Have you, Emma, ever tried to make a stout woman's dress fit you ? It is almost an impossibility. You may take in and cut out whole widths of the stuff—you still have yards upon yards too much ; with a too narrow one you can always add either lace or ribbon or some elegant trimming. So it is with ranters. One may spend one's life in controlling them, hushing them, quieting them, they always have yards and yards of frayed-out vocal chords. It is a most awful defect to cure. A speaker with a small voice may add beauty of diction, musical intonation, intellectual argument, and his lack of sound will never be detected. But you, you poor tired ranters, how I wish I could help you ! Emma, there is only one course to follow : fresh air, milk, and whispering exercises. These are the only practical means at your disposal, but mentally you can do a great deal for yourself. You must see in your mind the apex of a speech, and begin low. Don't rush up as if you were on a funicular railway. By the way, this is a very apt metaphor ; the ranter's use of his voice is just like the ascent of a train on a funicular railway. He pulls himself up by straining his vocal chords, as the funicular is pulled up a steep hill by a

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straining of ropes. One day his vocal organs snap, as might happen with the ropes of a funicular railway, with this difference, that the journey in the train is full of excitement and gives the utmost delight to the adventurous and foolhardy passengers, while the ranter only fatigues and harasses his hearers, with no excitement whatever to them, and danger only to himself.

A beautiful voice is the most wonderful gift God has ever made to mankind, and how an actor or preacher or barrister can destroy it, as he sometimes does, is a marvel to me.

I know there is often a great strain put upon the voice. I remember the opening of the second act of "Trilby" was very difficult for us all. The band was playing its loudest, and we—Mr. Maurice, Mr. Du Maurier, Mr. Brough, Mr. Ross, Mr. Esmond, and myself—had to say some excited sentences with our backs to the audience over the music. It was difficult, I admit, but we all did it without any strain whatever, and the audience never suspected how we had to manœuvre to be heard and yet not rant.

The cymbal player was pitiless. He was a great big Hungarian with a great big Hungarian zither, which he banged unmercifully with great big Hungarian hammers, a great big Hungarian tune. It

was frightfully exciting. The man himself was tame enough, and he presented us all with his card, on which was printed—

MR. Z*****ISKY,

*Store Street,
W.C.*

CYMBAL PLAY.

But he *could* bang, and we had to dodge his strokes so that the audience might hear us, as well as him and his zither. Another time I remember, when rehearsing the “Good Hope,” there was a tremendous scene between the mother (me) and her son (Mr. Barker). At first I went at it like a bull, but I soon found it would never do to take it at full vocal force, and yet the scene needed it; the base of the apex was so very near the top one was no sooner down it than one had to rush up again. It was a range of short Apennines. I didn’t know what to do. About the second rehearsal I found I was quite sore behind the ears from the strain of shouting. At last I got the apex; there was to be no screaming-point till the entrance of the police. It must be kept down and intense till they came in—Vesuvius bubbling but not in active eruption.

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On the day of the performance I kept my head. Oh ! unusual thing at a first performance. I was just making ready for my great effect of full voice power—another two sentences would do it—when, horrors ! the police entered two speeches too soon. Alas ! my grand effect was gone ; but still I feel sure that scene was better even for the lack of a final effect than if it had been ragged all the way through. But I *do* admit, Emma, it was a great temptation to rant ; it would have been so much easier, and it would have saved me hours of work, for we spent a good deal of time and trouble upon that scene, and nobody but Mr. Barker and myself ever knew how difficult it was. Bother take those over-zealous policemen ! I don't think I shall ever forgive their untimely entrance.

There is no mechanical exercise that I know of except whispering which will cure ranting, and even then it must be mentally tackled. It is as easy to speak in Drury Lane as in the Vaudeville Theatre, as easy to speak in St. Paul's Cathedral as in a tiny chapel, if you mentally focus the size of the building. But it is frightfully difficult to speak in the open air. You cannot focus your voice over fields and trees and rivers with the horizon as your only sounding-board, but even there it is of no use to rant.

One of my pack had to play St. Freideswyde in the Oxford Pageant. She was drawn in an open cart with several other girls, and had a very long speech to make with her profile to the audience; she began by pitching her voice into a kind of punchinello squeak. By dint of work, and great faith in me, she got it to a basso profundo, and at the performances spoke in such deep sonorous well-cadenced tones that *she was the only one heard of all the speakers*, and though Nature had not endowed her with a large voice she mentally *stretched* it, but physically she did not strain it at all.

There was one man on the same occasion who spoke for over ten minutes. He had a very big voice and he faced the audience, I give you my word I did not hear one single syllable. They tell me he came off the grounds in a state of collapse every day from sheer fatigue of bawling. To my mind there should be no speaking parts in pageants.

It is a mistake to speak in the open air at all, except at elections, where the speaker is quite close to his audience and above them, speaking down to them, not up, and on a subject of great personal interest to them all.

A pastoral play is admissible with natural enclosures of trees and bushes, so that the voice of the player is concentrated and does not evaporate into

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thin air, but in *any* case the speaker should lower his voice, not raise it. That is the great mistake some speakers make, they raise the voice when they want to be heard; and it is a known fact that the voice carries a great deal farther when it is lowered.

Why does a stage whisper carry so far? Because to make a whisper carry at all in a big building you have to whisper in a tone which would be impossible for you to speak in *full* voice, it is below the speaking register. Ranting is above the register, and that is why whispering exercises are of so much use to the ranter. Here is a very good whispering exercise by Browning, and if you can understand the poem you ought not to find any difficulty in understanding what I mean by *mentally* focusing your voice.

As I ride
as I ride
with a full heart for my guide
so its tide
Rocks my side
as I ride
That as I were double-eyed
He in whom our tribes confide
is descried in

ways untried
as I ride—as I ride.

If ranting is a fault in an actor, how much worse is it in a preacher. The vaulted roof of a church is filled with sounding-boards, and each cadence of the voice finds its way into every niche and corner of it. A preacher should speak in a low voice and very slowly. He should use emphasis rather than inflection. Some imaginative person long ago discovered the value of an intoned phrase, and ever after it has been the accepted form of church diction. Intoning carries as plain speech can never do, and when a man has to preach, he should use the same means. He need not be afraid of monotony if he emphasises freely. Of course I do not mean he should intone his sermons as he intones the responses, but use his voice in the same manner.

I remember a Portuguese monk preaching a Lenten sermon at the Carmelites once; it was a very short one, and he spoke very little English, but it impressed me so much that I feel I may be allowed to give it here as I remember it.

Dear Belove—

Lent much grinding of teet—no joy all fast—to eat, the Popé our bless farder say in pascal lett-err,

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turnips, carrots, potatoes—rice cook in water—some sago, in milk on Wednesday—but Friday no milk—Sunday, Hegg—fish, and rice with milk and butter—no fruit, no vegetables dat grow over de ground—no flesh, no fowl, much fish with sprinkles of pickle salt—bread cook three days—no wine—no beer, no whiskey, no brandy, but for ill people all food what they like. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost Amen.

This was said in a rich musical baritone voice in a sing-song tone, and it was most impressive. Our duty was clearly defined, and every detail given so emphatically there was no getting away from it, and as I write this sermon comes vividly back to me—"Lent much grinding of teet—no joy all fast—turnips, carrots and potatoes," &c. Now if he had ranted we should have remembered nothing—it would have been no better than a hawker crying vegetables on his barrow—but as he gave it—foreign accent and all—it was a Lenten order direct from the Pope to every Roman penitent in the town of London.

The music of that monk's voice rings in my ears to this day—clear and full and rich. It gave spirituality to materialism. It was not only an order not to eat flesh and fowl, it was an edict

against all worldly things of this life for forty days. We were to go into a state of fasting—for forty days we were not to touch anything that grows above the earth, but dig into the roots of our souls for the food of our minds. That is what this Portuguese monk conveyed by his well-trained rhythmical voice. That is what you, O priests, have to aim at—to convey a message in its fullest sense, and a loud voice strained and harsh will never do it. The ranter conveys nothing, but “inexplicable dumb show and noise”—“I would have such a fellow whipped for o’er-doing Termagant; it out-herods Herod; pray you avoid it.”

Yours affectionately,

ROSINA MOTHER.

LETTER VI

EMPHASIS; EMOTION; COLOUR; TONE

“Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor.”

MY DEAR CATHLEEN,

My eldest daughter, my very dear daughter, do in Heaven's name open your mouth and let me hear you speak your lines as you feel them, think them. Your mind is the most cultivated of any of my beloved students; you think like a cultured, mature woman of double your age. I have often marvelled at the sobriety of your mind, and at all the knowledge you possess. At the very first reading of a part you get the very soul out of it, and *then* you fix your teeth together, and in a dull monotone you sing-song your words, and the whole structure goes to pieces. You seem to be terrified at emphasis. My dear girl, nearly every word has to be emphasised, and *no* word is unimportant, not one syllable of it. You *must* exert yourself to speak

up. You say you are heard in the gallery. Perhaps those who know you and have climbed up the many steps leading to that elevated position in the house, hear you with love's familiar ear, but the indifferent stalls only see you as a pretty girl with a dull, unemotional voice. It isn't that you don't work, for you do, but you work mentally, not emotionally.

You have, to begin with, that shocking fault of locking your teeth together; nearly all Irish women do this—I can't think why; you are not the first Irish girl whose jaws I have wanted to open with an oyster-knife, and wrench away the pearls of speech. You have no stress of speech, you speak beautifully. Your voice is refined, and has breeding in it, but no one can hope to speak well with locked jaws. You really *must* open your mouth, and you *must* use your top lip. The lower jaw working alone gives an ugly expression to the face, and you are too pretty to spoil yourself by acquiring a sinister expression. Make the upper as well as the lower jaw work. I'll give you an exercise for that. Bawl this out—

Oh! *why will you wake my Baby?*

Your neighbours in the flat will be shocked at this repeated cry, but it will answer the purpose of loosening your jaws; and *mark* the syllables, please. I believe if not looked after you will still manage to

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say that sentence with locked teeth, but you mustn't, you must exert yourself to say the sentence with an *open* mouth. Do you see how often I underline words in this letter?—it is to make you *feel* emphasis.

You can't do anything until your jaws are loose. As you are mentally so strong, can't you employ this mentality to overcome such a small physical defect of speech?

And now, dear child, though you often declare you are unemotional by nature, I know better. It is about that principally I want to speak to you.

I can't teach you emotion, and I certainly would never try to do so even if it could be taught or learnt. That emotion which is taught belongs to the school of Ella Kew-Shun—tears can't be turned on at a tap. I see your emotional side, not by your expression in your work, but by your dress. No phlegmatic person could wear colours with such daring as you do. Your copper-coloured scarves, your greens, and your blues belong to an emotional nature—and it is on your love of colour that I would work. Turn your mind to the coppers, and blues, and greens you adorn yourself with. Have no fear to express these—separated or blended in your work. Emotion is to the mind what colour is to the painter. It is the pigment which makes the pencilled sketch into a finished picture. Don't call it

emotion, call it colour, and you will no longer be afraid of expressing yourself.

There is a poem by Robert Louis Stevenson which invariably makes me cry, because of its wonderful colour. I have heard it recited a thousand times, and every time I feel sombre loneliness in its lines till I can hardly bear them. It is a silly enough little poem, in the "Child's Garden of Verse," called "Leary," but the colour in it is so true, so powerful, and the tones so vivid, that in the course of three or four verses I am reduced to a state little short of convulsions. Surely you are not going to deny the emotional side of this poem? And yet how simple it is. It's hardly worth learning as a recitation; any one using emotion in an artificial way would rob it of its truth and make it ridiculous. Its emotion lies in its simplicity, and the simpler you are the truer will be your emotion. "But be not too tame, neither." Be as simple as you like. Simplicity is not weakness, and nothing over-elaborated is ever strong. At the same time, simplicity should not be flabby; every line should be terse and clearly cut, and terseness is what you lack. Your gestures, your speech, your work all need tightening up. You are like a beautiful Stradivarius with all the strings slack. How can you expect to get tone out of yourself under these

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conditions? Your author cannot get a sound out of you, your audience cannot hear a sound. I've often watched you in everyday life. It is the soft climate of your country, I suppose, that still influences your blood; you never sit square on a seat—you never walk with your legs—your whole body slouches; your gestures are all inanimate, your voice is monotoned, you never go up and down the hills of inflection, you hover somewhere at the base of them; every member of your body wants to be woken up. Your body seems to have no object, and that is the more surprising as your mind is ever on the alert. Do you ever work before a looking-glass? It is a good plan to do so at the beginning of your studies. You should learn the potion scene in "Romeo and Juliet" in a dimly lighted room before a long glass. Say it when all the rest of the family has gone to bed, and say it so that none of them will be disturbed in their sleep. Juliet is alone in her room, but the rest of the household is up, and if she made as much noise as most actresses do when they say it, everybody, from her father to the cook who is preparing the marriage-feast, would rush in to know what was the matter. I imagine Juliet's room *curtained* off from the one in which the nurse and Lady Capulet and some sewing-maids are busy with her wedding-dress, and her terrors—in three sections

—are mental, not physical. Noise in fear is the expression of a physical instinct for help and not of mental agony. Juliet reiterates the fears she mentioned to the Friar in a former scene. When with him in the broad daylight she scorns the idea of fear overmastering her courage—

“O, bid me leap, rather than marry Paris,
From off the battlements of yonder tower ;
Or walk in thievish ways ; or bid me lurk
Where serpents are ; chain me with roaring bears ;
Or shut me nightly in a charnel-house,
O’er-covered quite with dead men’s rattling bones,
With reeky shanks, and yellow chapless skulls ;
Or bid me go into a new-made grave,
And hide me with a dead man in his shroud ;
Things that, to hear them told, have made me
tremble ;
And I will do it without fear or doubt,
To live an unstain’d wife to my sweet love.”

But, when she is alone, the fears she conjectured to the Friar, come more vividly to her imagination—she realises she *may* be called upon to face the charnel-house all alone—she *may* see the dead Tybalt “festering in his shroud.” Each picture, as it leaps up to her, brings a fresh horror, but in her

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subconscious state she knows she must not call out loud, otherwise her only chance of escape from her marriage with Paris will be at an end. This scene should be whispered from beginning to end, and it is the intensity of her feelings that will fill the whole theatre with the terrors she is feeling.

Yes, it is difficult—but once you have satisfied yourself you have got it, the rest comes easily enough, for it is only a mechanism of voice production. When you have *got* the feeling, turn up the lights in your room, cover your looking-glass and begin again. Don't mind the sleeping family any more. It is *you*, Cathleen, that have now to work up that scene to a *crescendo*, not Juliet. Your work should now be introspective; remember the effect you made on yourself as you worked it out in the semi-darkness, and now chisel it, devoid of personal emotion. No actress has any business to feel the emotion she is portraying when it is ready for public inspection; you must *have* felt it, emotion to you is a thing of the past, it has now to have a concrete form, you have to hand it bodily over the footlights, and so far is it from being a matter of lack of emotion to feel it no more, it is generally a sure sign that the emotion is truer, surer and stronger because, in the dead of night, alone in your bedroom, you once felt it and were able to fix it. It is always

with you ; one's love of the dead is far greater than one's love of the living ; you remember all the beauty of their character, which you never noticed while they were with you. So it is with the emotion of a character you play, you must have been at its deathbed, holding its hand as it passed over the Rubicon.

The actress from whose eyes tears fall nightly is never impressive, but the actress from whose eyes no tears have ever fallen is not worthy of a part in a Music Hall sketch ; you can't be a truly great comedienne without the note of tragedy, and *vice versa*—tears and laughter are the twin daughters of every true artist.

Monotony is the result of lack of colour, emotion, inflection. Inflection is dependent on emphasis. Emphasis is gained by husbanding the breath. Every phrase or strophe has one breath—whether it be within commas or a whole paragraph—only one breath is needed. During the progress of the sentence, beginning at the base and rising to the apex, are little stations, so to speak, where the word leans out of the window, like a passenger in a train. The breath gives it emphasis, colour and tone ; but this must be arrived at through the student's mental appreciation of the sentence. He must *think* emphasis, *think* emotion, no one can teach it to him.

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Of course one can tell a student to mark such and such words in a sentence, one can tell him to raise the voice at the end of the line, one can tell him to pause here, or hurry there, but the pupil who needs all this teaching will never be anything more than a pupil. Emphasis, emotion, inflection come from the inner mind and cannot be taught; no one can teach such a thing any more than any one can teach a rose or a lily to give out fragrant odours.

An actor of great talent and a terrible practical joker was rehearsing a part in a big Shakespearean production. One of his lines was—"And down came their hose;" the actor manager didn't like the way he said it and stopped the rehearsal that he might say it again, and this was the result—

Manager. And *down* came their *hose* !

Actor. And *down came* their *hose*.

Manager. No—no, and *down* came their *hose* !

Actor. *And* *down* came their *hose*.

Manager. No !—you haven't got it right yet—And *down* came their *hose* !

Actor. *And* *down came* their *hose*.

Manager. But is it possible you can't hear? And DOWN came their HOSE.

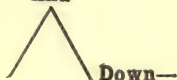
Actor. AND down came THEIR hose.

Manager. Say it after me, please, and DOWN.

Actor. *And down?*

Manager. DOWN, with a *downward* inflection, please.

Actor. **And**



Manager. You must be tone deaf. *And down came their hose—*

Actor. Ah! I see——



The Manager losing patience and very hot from his exertions gave it up. "Let us go on with the rehearsal," said he.

Actor. No, please let me try and do it properly—give me the cue again (the cue was given), "*And down came their hose!*" said he quite naturally.

The Manager was delighted, and he never knew that the actor had been amusing himself and the whole company by his apparent obtuseness, but firmly believed that he had, with great difficulty, taught him to speak the line, as it should be spoken.

One of the reasons it is futile to try and teach

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inflection is, that given seven intelligent interpreters of a part in a play, each of the seven will give a totally different reading, and each a good one—that is why understudying is such a shocking training for the young; the understudy has to give a photographic performance of the original, and all individuality is stamped out by this method.

Of course one must have understudies in a theatre, but it is a great pity they are not allowed to use their own discretion; it is easy to keep the same *positions* on the stage, but impossible to speak the lines in exact imitation of the original. That talent belongs to the mimic, and not to the actor. Cissie Loftus is simply wonderful in her imitations. When she imitated Mrs. Patrick Campbell in the part of "Lady Patricia," I was among the audience, and it was as much as I could do not to speak my lines when the cue came. But one can't expect a Cissie Loftus among ordinary understudies, and to hear the same inflections given by one who has not the imitative talent makes the understudy's work dull and uninspired. If the understudy were given a free hand with his lines, it might often put the company out, because one is accustomed to hear the same inflection night after night, and a new reading is sometimes confusing—but it would be a much better performance as far as the understudy was concerned,

and it would raise him above the subordinate position he holds in a theatre.

This, however, is not allowed ; he has to say his lines parrot fashion, and generally succeeds in giving as much colour to them as that mysterious bird who thinks so much, and says such awful things when he first comes off the ship that brought him to England.

To understudy, parrot, and you, dear Cathleen, therefore one may safely say, "Be not too tame, neither," but in each case the line is capable of a different reading !

"Lay this to thy heart, and farewell."

MOTHER ROSINA.

LETTER VII

KNOWLEDGE OF THE BOARDS ; SENSE OF
RHYTHM ; SENSE OF BALANCE ; SENSE OF
HARMONY

“Suit the action to the word, the word to the action ; with this special observance that you o’erstep not the modesty of nature.”

MY DEAR DENNY (and a quantity of others),

How very much the above quotation applies to your case—at least the first half of it—for it is one of the rarest things for a beginner to have this power of suiting the action to the word, and the word to the action. But it does not only apply to gesture, it comprises knowledge of the boards, a sense of rhythm, a sense of balance, a sense of harmony. Oddly enough it is usually the fault of the slight and graceful rather than of the stout and solid of body. You who are so slight, so fair, so light of movement, are *always* in the way, I cannot think why ; you are smaller made than most women, and yet you manage to hide big men and stout women. The reason is, I think, that you only learn *your* part ; you learn your cues, but you don’t

realise from which side of you they are likely to be given. Now it is of no use for an actor to play his part from *his* side of the footlights, he must *see* himself as part of the play.

The first thing to do on coming on to the stage is to build the house you are supposed to live in. The entrance door of a room on *upper* floors cannot possibly be on the same flat as a window ; if it were you must invariably fall into the area every time you make an exit. If this arrangement is inevitable, however, in order to meet the requirements of stage management the door *must* be facing a corridor. It must mentally form part of a wing of the house ; and this corridor should be firmly fixed in your mind as you go in and out of the room (stage). In that case a door in the left or right flat cannot exist, for no architect would build such a queer house. Just imagine the surrounding architecture of a room built in this way :—



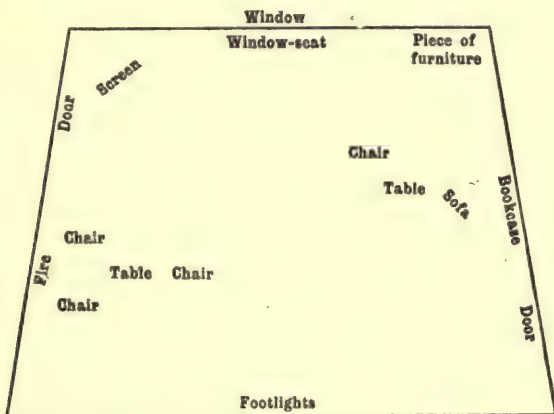
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There is no house that could be lived in of this peculiar shape, you *must* pass through the principal room to get at the two others, right and left. One might put another corridor on the side of one of the rooms—but where do you build your staircase? It is altogether an impossible house, and yet how often does this occur on the stage.

Did you ever see “Is Matrimony a Failure”? Every time I came on the stage, I worried about the shape of my own house. There was a very high staircase right bang in the middle of the stage. It was the *pièce de résistance* of the whole setting. As everybody came down it—and most of the actors rushed in from the street—I came to the conclusion that the street-door was somewhere beyond the staircase; and yet there was a door *on* the stage that led out into the garden. I know how all the characters came down from the street-door, but how did they get up to it? We were like Japanese mice—out of the garden-door one minute, down from the street the next. Was there the same silly flight of steps from the garden to the street-door that there was from the street-door to the stage? If so, why did we *all* go in and out by the *street*-door when the *garden*-door would have been so much easier? I tremble to think what you would have done in this piece; you would have blocked up the staircase, you

would have bunged up the door, for you would have had no help from the producer. He never built this house in his imagination for the convenience of the players. They had to make the best of a very bad bargain.

However, we will build you a rational room to come in and out of. The window is centre, there is a door in the right upper flat, and a door left lower flat, a fire-place below door, right. See diagram with furniture—a study shall we say?



Have well in your mind the position of the furniture. It is probably a room you, in the character you play, will know well, therefore you won't bang yourself up against the furniture—you wouldn't in

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your own house, neither would you run at people to speak to them, as you do on the stage—you don't gauge your distances, nor the position of the other characters.

The only way to put yourself into the character of a play is to get out of it. (No, I have no Irish blood in my veins!) You must, as it were, watch yourself, as if you were not in your own body. It isn't you, Denny, that is on the stage; Denny is guiding Molly or Emily or Susan in a play; you mustn't let Molly push you about, because Molly is subjective to Denny.

This instinct of place, knowledge of the boards, is the most difficult thing to acquire. Every actor should feel in his bones the exact spot he is to occupy in the scene, and the want of this instinct will do more to retard a beginner's progress than anything else. It is the actor's antennæ, it is his sixth sense. You know I rehearse you all with a fencing foil. It is a delicate, sensitive weapon, and I use it to place you on the stage; the hundredth part of an inch will be all that is needed sometimes to put you *en place*, but sometimes I have to prod quite hard to make you budge that hair's-breadth of a space. In the old school of acting no one ever got nearer to another than at the full length of their arms. The finger-tips just touched,

This is a most beautiful distance in old comedies. "The School for Scandal" played *nez à nez* is a terrible performance. It lacks epoch, dignity, and period. I think all modern players play too near each other; the modern method of love-making is most disagreeable, they breathe into each other's faces in a horrible way. I don't believe real lovers talk in this unpleasant fashion, in fact I know they don't, and the distance of the actors from the audience focuses as it were all their movements into a nearer space. The audience is quite capable of seeing for itself that these two people are lovers, they need not emphasise the fact by such nearness of person; still, bad as this method of love-making is on the stage, there is a worse one which must at all points be avoided, that of not coming near *enough*. An *embrace* on the stage must be quite close, both bodies must touch, there must be no space; some people embrace as if they were a pair of sticks balancing together at the top, so—



That is "o'er-stepping the modesty of nature" with a vengeance. One does not realise half enough how

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very much the audience notices movements, gesture, positions, and none should be made uselessly.

Mr. Boucicault's stage management is wonderful. He makes you do each action of your part at a given moment. It appears a fidgety method to the inexperienced, but it is a most valuable one to those who know the importance of movement. Long before you have properties to act with he makes you do the action suggesting the use of properties ; by this method you could play the part *without* properties, and the audience would be none the wiser. It isn't the glass out of which you drink, but the action of drinking which is conveyed to the audience, and if you do the action *with* a glass at the wrong moment the effect is muffled—you are an amateur.

Long ago I taught at a most interesting school. There were a hundred little girls ranging in age from eight to sixteen years, and they once played the Forum scene from "Julius Cæsar." They were seated in tiers on the platform waiting for the then Bishop of London to distribute the prizes. About forty out of the hundred were successful candidates, and went back loaded with books to their several seats on the tiers. All the little ones were dressed in a sort of uniform of dark-blue serge, with white pinafores, the older girls, some in blue, some

in grey serge, very neat and very girlish, their pretty well-brushed hair shining in the sunlight, their gentle faces placid and contented. As the last girl returned to her seat, and the Bishop sat down in his, facing them, the smallest child, in a high treble voice, came forward and announced the scene. The entire school rose in a body; group one rushed down two steps, group two rushed up three steps, group three rushed from right to left, group four from left to right. "We will be satisfied, let us be satisfied," and with these words the hundred school-girls, without accessories of any kind, became infuriated Roman citizens, and the scene proceeded with an animation and vitality seldom seen on the *professional* stage. They played the whole scene without *one* property. At a given moment, six in grey marched in; they were the Lictors. Immediately behind them came four girls in dark-blue serge, carrying an imaginary bier; they kept a rigid distance of seven feet the whole length of the platform. When Mark Antony said, "What, weep you when you but behold our Cæsar's vesture wounded? Look you here!" she drew an imaginary mantle from off an imaginary corpse, and the crowd wept. At the end of the scene they carried away the bier, as if indeed there were a tangible one to carry away, with the murdered Cæsar lying on it.

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That is what I call suiting the action to the word, the word to the action.

One of the funniest and most life-like performances of conjuring I ever saw was done by a man who had nothing to conjure with. He caught imaginary coins in the air, out of his leg, from his nose ; he did the handkerchief trick, card tricks, tricks with top-hats, rabbits, watches, and never a property had he—but his performance of a conjurer was perfect. You *saw* the tricks he never performed. Properties are not necessities to an actor, they are sometimes very cumbersome luxuries, and one who cannot pretend a property is not worthy of the name of actor. They are luxuries, and very helpful ones, and one should, of course, have them, but one ought to be able to do without them should the occasion arise. In one of the plays I acted in the hero had to have a cigarette-case. The producer ordered a *gold* cigarette-case, which must have cost about twenty pounds. Not satisfied with this absurdity he insisted on the hero's monogram being engraved upon it. The syndicate paid for it, and the play ran three weeks.

Besides it being virile to find the right action on the stage—gesture or movement—it gives a harmonious finish to a performance. One is conscious of the lack of attention to this very often in a church

service. In the Roman Catholic Church the Mass is treated much in the same way as a play. It is in point of fact the survival of a mystery play. One can follow the service without a book, and with no knowledge of Latin. Given a key to the symbolic by-play of priests and acolytes, one can follow every scene of the mystic drama. Nothing can be more impressive than the raising of the Host. The priest faces the congregation, and at the sound of a bell he raises it once, every head in the congregation is bowed. He raises it a second time, a second time the bell is jangled, still the congregation remains bowed and silent. He raises it a third time, and a third time the bell announces that Christ is in their midst. Then the priest turns to the altar and raises it to the Spirit of God, and the congregation slowly lift their heads.

That is the way it is done in a well-organised Church of Rome; but in France, in Normandy, it is not done like that at all. I shall never forget the panic my husband and I had at Greville, the birth-place of François Millet. It was Whit-Sunday. We had bicycled to Landemere, and were about to go into the church when we saw a man crouched outside one of the doors. He carried a gun, and he was looking through the key-hole. Suddenly without

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warning he fired his gun, and ran with terrible swiftness to another door, where he behaved exactly in the same way. When he prepared to run for the door we were standing by, we took to our heels, threw ourselves on our bicycles, and never stopped till we got back to Landemere. We were thoroughly convinced we had seen a madman ; but when we explained to the hotel people our fears, we learned that at Greville, and many other places in the neighbourhood, the man with the gun is in place of the jingling bell. “ C’est le bon Esprit qui entre par la porte.”

Now this is *not* suiting the action to the word.

At another church in Normandy where I attended service, my seriousness was a little tried by having the postman (who sat next to me) giving the priest his note to intone on a French horn, which was slung over his arm, there being no organ.

At another church, during *Tenebræ*, the priest in a horrible nasal tone chanted a verse of a psalm, and when it was the turn of the choir-boys to give the response banged a pair of wooden clappers together, to give them their cue, as it were.

Here was a case of useless properties. The only property the priest needed was a fine cultivated voice and a knowledge of the spirit of the words. This

kind of service you will say is impossible in England in the orthodox church. I admit there is a great deal more reverence in a Church of England service, but it is often dreadfully amateurish. It needs stage management. The village carpenter and the blacksmith, who form part of a village choir, have usually fine, magnificent voices, such voices as would make the fortune of an opera singer, but they are too often hampered by a totally incompetent player of a wheezy harmonium. How often the reading of a lesson has been marred by the nasal twang of the curate who read it. How often the music chosen has been totally out of the range of voice of the choir, or their musical knowledge. The idea "of suiting the action to the word, the word to the action," never seems to trouble the mind of the officiating country clergy. They are for the most part careless and unimaginative.

Down in the East End, where the spirit of Socialism is rife, the services are magnificently given. There the clerical mind is right up against aggressive atheism, and having that to combat it fights with splendid weapons. The service is read dramatic, its music is simple, generally Gregorian. Its workers are nervous, wiry, strong men, with a great object before them, that of killing that hundred-headed hydra, atheism, that is sapping

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the spiritual life of the wretched black sheep still in their care. I have in my mind one settlement especially. It is a mission of Anglican monks. There is a huge hall, down which small tables and chairs are placed in symmetrical order, furnished with paper and pens and ink. At the far end a huge fire burns all through the winter. In summer the doors are wide open upon the big shady garden. Indeed, the doors are never locked. At intervals during the night wretched men slink in and sit by the fire and get warmed, then they slink out again. At some tables are others who read any book they ask for of the librarian. These are strange students, advanced atheists, the outcasts of even East End society. They are not spoken to, and sometimes the same man will come in night after night to read a special book, and never exchange a word with any of the brothers. In the gallery about twenty of the monks intone psalms in wonderful voices, for they have all been well trained. There are other monks in the big hall, some writing, some reading, always ready to give spiritual help, but never obtruding it ; and so the nights pass, and in the many years that these men have been working silently, with one great object, they have gathered as many hundreds of souls within the fold as their more opulent brothers of the West End, and

the country, have lost to the church. They are a wonderful set of men, ascetic but never bigoted, strong but never brutal, gentle but never worldly, kind but never weak, poor but never mean. They have learnt the Christian method of "suiting the word to the action, the action to the word," with this special observance that they never "o'er-step the modesty of nature." Their minds have learned balance, their hearts have learnt harmony, they have got the power and strength of real action which should exist in all art, and they have got it by the same subjugation of the body that is the only method of acquiring mastery of the mind, whether it be in art, science, church, or stage.

There must be complete harmony, materially and mentally. So, Denny dear, balance your mind. The life of one's body is governed by the rhythmic beat of one's pulse. An intermittent pulse is the sign of something very seriously wrong with one's heart, a rampant pulse is the sign of something very seriously wrong with one's mind; and art is governed by regular pulsation as much as the body. So, my dear child, don't be so like a black beetle in your movements, or so like a mosquito in your methods. Keep your gentleness, which is your great charm, but don't let it buzz in every

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direction with no apparent object but to fall over the furniture, knock over your fellow-actors, and drop helplessly into the orchestra.

Your affectionate

ROSINA MOTHER.

LETTER VIII

"NATURAL" ACTING

"For anything so over-done is far from the purpose of playing ; whose end, both at the first, and now, was, and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature ; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure."

TO EILEEN, GLADYS, PERCEVAL, OWEN, AND
GWENDOLINE

MY DEARS,

I think this phrase is the epitome of the whole speech, and applies to *all* the arts. "To hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature." Do you realise what this means? Shakspeare does not ask his player to be *natural* ; he asks him to *reflect* nature—two very different things. It is quite natural for a clergyman to read the lesson with his hands in his pockets, but does he by that natural movement *reflect* the dignity of his calling?—he won't even look like a clergyman, in spite of his surplice and "collar that buttons at the back" ; he will be merely

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an ill-mannered man, masquerading in the garb of the clergy.

A doctor sitting on his patient's bed and kicking the leg of the bed is merely a careless man—careless of his patient's comfort, and careless of the dignity of his profession, and yet it is a very natural thing to do. When he was at Guy's or Bart.'s he probably very often called at a fellow-student's rooms, and finding him not yet up very naturally sat on the bed while the two discussed musical comedies or fractures ; but when he left hospital to go into his own practice, he had to put away such natural manners and hold up the mirror, as it were, to the *accepted* bedside manner of a doctor. If this so strongly applies to these two professions, how much more must the actor bear in mind that he cannot be natural in the literal sense of the word—he must *appear* natural.

I speak feelingly, for I have always been called “a natural actress.” I have no belief in so-called natural acting. I am sure everything ought to be fixed before it comes to the public view. As a piece goes into a long run, one may make tentative improvements in keeping with the part, and finding they are improvements fix them to stay ; but plain, unvarnished, natural acting goes

into the category of Dumb Crambo—charming when performed by children who have made make-believe the study of their whole life. No child is a child *per se*, it is always living in a pretence world of its own; and when it can't, it is a mighty dull little thing. Childhood was in a sad way a few years ago, when everything they loved and wondered at was reduced to a scientific truth. Then J. M. Barrie brought them his delicious "Peter Pan," and children once more came into their own.

"Do you believe in fairies?" Indeed, indeed, I do. I believe in the fairy who waves her wand and makes an incomparable 'Viola' of a great strapping school-girl, an 'Othello' of a macaroni-eating Sicilian peasant, a 'Hamlet' of a respectable civilian paterfamilias, a side-splitting 'Lady Twombley' of a Christian Scientist. This fairy who holds up the mirror for all these great artists to reflect the nature they are portraying is too strong and powerful to admit of disbelief, but she does not wave her wand to a murderess to play Lady Macbeth.

Natural acting would necessitate a nightly holocaust; Othello would nightly have to kill a new Desdemona. She would be the bridal victim of the Arabian Nights. I am wrong, because

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Othello himself would have nightly to take by the throat "the uncircumcised dog, and smite him thus."

It is very difficult to hold the mirror up to nature. No one is more aware of it than I am. One requires a great deal of unnatural knowledge to appear natural, but there is a very powerful fairy who can give one that knowledge, and her name is Imagination. Even the compiler of the dictionary cannot keep her out of its pages, for among the several million words he deals with he describes her thus: Imagination—the image of reality, the image of the mind (a seeming reality). *She* is the mirror of nature, and without her aid nothing can seem real.

It is the imagination that makes a "walk on" on the stage appear of the greatest importance to the players and of such inestimable value to the structure of a play. No part is unimportant; every part in a play is what every syllable is to a word, and that is what young folks cannot believe.

I've often heard our girls and boys say, who may be only "walking on": "Oh! if I could only get my chance!" But that *is* a chance; it isn't a stepping-stone to the playing of Hamlet or Juliet, but it is a profession of its own. Why haven't you clothed your "walk on" with a

definite character? There is nothing in the script to say you are not Mrs. Jones, a mother of a large family, or Charlie Jenkins, a grocer's assistant. These are two characterisations which will take all your imagination to endow with the magic spark of life.

"Do you believe in fairies?" Of course not, or you wouldn't grumble at having "nothing better to do."

There is only one fault to find with the stage, and that is the want of imagination from the producers of plays to the crowd that sulkily mouch through their work. Individually, here and there one comes across a scintillating spirit, but collectively, it is a profession devoid of imagination and incidentally of seeming reality.

The centre of "The Merchant of Venice" is 'Antonio,' not 'Shylock,' and an imaginative producer, giving Antonio the place he ought to occupy, would give a reality to the play it lacks when produced with Shylock as the star-part. The principal star-part is of no more importance than the small ones, and when a small character has an important moment in a play, that part ought to have the important place on the stage at that particular moment, and not be forced by its subordinate position in the theatre, of words

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weighed against words, to fritter away a scene by unimaginative production. All the parts in a play, great or small, are like pieces on a chess-board. A pawn can often capture a queen, and the queen *must* make a move when she is in danger. It is no use her usurping the centre of the board; she can't tyrannically keep it; if she does, she will lose the game as surely as the leaders of a play often lose it to their management. No matter what the part, it is only a bit, a fragment, of a whole, and requires as careful adjustment as the smallest. But the producer invariably places the stars right in the centre of interest. Any Tomfool knows that an artist getting £100 a week for his services is worth more than one who is only getting five; but at certain moments of the play the five-pounder is of more value to the play than the "star." This the producers will seldom admit. They make their leading artist seem to say, with Julius Cæsar, "I am constant as the Northern Star, of whose true and fix'd and resting quality there is no fellow in the firmament. . . . So, in the world, 'tis furnish'd well with men. . . . Yet in the number I do know but one that unassailable holds on his rank, unshak'd of motion, and that I am he. Let me a little show it, even in this";

whereupon Julius Cæsar was stabbed right through the middle, and down he came for all his boasting. Now there *are* other stars, and that cold grey eye of the Pole-star is more the author's than the actor's place in the heavens. Mars, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn have their rise and fall. They are luminous at one time, and obscured by others at another; but so surely as the world goes round they will rise again in all their majesty, and as each comes back their beauty is the more intense and wonderful for their momentary disappearance, in obedience to the exigencies put upon them by the Pole and dominant star.

When will Shakespeare be played with Shakespeare as the Pole-star and his characters the planets that rise and fall to his dictates? Never—till we have a producer who is an imaginative mathematician. The ordinary producer has not the first rudiments of mathematics, any more than he has the first spark of imagination. I don't think mathematics and imagination are so far apart as people say. *Mathematics*: the science of numbers, measurements, calculations (true accuracy).

Imagination: an image of reality, an image formed in the mind (a seeming accuracy).

Without imagination how could the world go on?

but without mathematics where would imagination not lead one. One might almost call them the male and female element of mind, imagination (Eve) is continually giving mathematics (Adam) the apple of the tree of knowledge to eat. Mathematics digs the earth by the sweat of his brow, imagination bears him children.

I know that I have gone off the rails hopelessly as a writer of an elocution book, but I never meant this to be edited by Ella. Her art is spelt with a capital A, I would have you spell yours—Religion. The Greeks and Romans knew its importance in the well-being of humanity, and made art gods to be worshipped: Apollo and the nine muses, Minerva and that wonderful little artist Arachne who could not outlive the shame of her work not being comparable to a goddess's. How imaginative they were, these sloping foreheaded men of Greece, and what have they not done for us of the Northern cold countries! We with our square solid heads call their religion mythology; but what fields of imagination have they not opened out to us, and in these fields we should all walk; if we are to "hold the mirror up to nature," we must cultivate our imagination. It is imagination that makes the realist a living artist, without it his work is merely photographic, flat, devoid of atmosphere, character, adjustment.

Remember, we are to reflect nature, the creation of our art is precisely the same as the creation of man ; the actor is the materialisation of the spiritual creation of his author. Man is the materialisation of the spiritual concepts of God. Art is God-sent. It is absolutely spiritual ; it has no materialism in it whatever ; it is transcribed through an author, a painter, a musician, straight from God. It has no materialisation till it reaches the artist. The painter materialises it on canvas, the musician inscribes it on five-lined ruled paper, the author writes it in a copy-book, and the actor becomes the flesh and blood idea of his author. But the source of all life in art comes straight from the spiritual idea of which our work is but the image, the reflection.

So, to the four winds with Ella Kew-Shun, who would teach us how to speak and how to act. Nobody on this earth ever spoke as she would have us speak. It isn't natural, nor has it the semblance of nature ; a clear diction is the rudiment of speech, it is the Dadda and Mamma of the actor's art, and he must absolutely forget his baby talk when he has a man's emotion to portray. When you have to impersonate a Cabinet Minister be *like* a Cabinet Minister, not the portrait of any special Cabinet Minister—that will only result in a caricature ; when

you play Lady Macbeth, be *like* her, not Lady Macbeth herself. How can you be, *you* have no wish to murder Duncan; when you play Romeo, don't be Romeo, to Miss So-and-so's Juliet, you must be so wonderfully like him that every woman in the audience will feel a Juliet to you. She will buy your portrait, and think it is you, Mr. So-and-so, she admires so much; it is nothing of the sort, it is your faithful reflection of the truest and most attractive lover ever given to an actor to impersonate. She has fallen in love with Romeo, not you; when she sees you in real life she evinces the greatest disappointment she has ever had, but don't mind that, it is a great compliment to your acting, you have been the mirror to the character Romeo, and so sympathetically have you held it up to nature that she sees herself reflected in it. You don't want her to fall in love with *you*, do you? Leave the triumph of personal charm to the musical comedy artists, keep that miracle of showing the "very age and body of the time, his form and pressure," to yourself. And above all, believe in fairies.

Your affectionate

ROSINA MOTHER.

LETTER IX

THE CENTRE OF THE STAGE; LIMELIGHT EFFECTS; MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENTS; MELODRAMA

"Oh, there be players that I have seen play and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that neither having the accent of Christian, nor the gait of Christian Pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed, that I have thought some of Nature's journeymen have made men, they imitated humanity so abominably."

TO MY KINGS AND QUEENS. MY DEARS,

Those that are already kings and queens, beware of the centre of the stage—dodge that awful pin-spot of limelight. If you don't nip the desire of both at once in the bud, God knows how ridiculous you may not become; it will deprive you of that delicious sense of humour which is the birthright of every actor—be he tragedian or comedian.

Limelight, plenty of it, and the centre of the stage exclusively belong to pantomime, musical-comedy, and melodrama. Don't descend to employ those means when you are acting the fine emotional plays ever at your hand.

To see Hamlet, Macbeth, King Lear, Lady Macbeth, the Silver King, Peleas and Melisande, Marguerite Gautier, Faust, Gretchen, Carlton, the Prisoner of Zenda, Malvolio, Chatterton, D'Artagnan, and others persistently followed about by Tinka Bell is simply laughable.

Where does that will-o'-the-wisp come from? There is no window, door, or cranny to account for its penetrating insistence; it is merely there, right in the middle of the unfortunate actor's face—showing every detail of his make-up unmercifully in its uncompromising glare.

I was talking about this absurdity to an American artist, who instanced the sole and only occasion when she was placed under the torture of it, having in all her career refused to submit to being pricked out by any limelight. I give the story in her words as far as I remember them.

“It was at Duxbury, a then very small seaside place near Boston. It was a beautiful night. I had gone to bed, when my husband came to me in his pyjamas. ‘It’s too fine to be in bed,’ said he; ‘come and look at the night.’ As I was, in my night-gown and cotton kimono, I sat with him on a bench outside the little villa which was ours for three months in the summer. It *was* a beautiful night—so hot that our meagre costumes were none too

flimsy, and we looked out over the dark sea and the sleeping village. Suddenly a terrific light was switched on to us—a searchlight from a ship at sea, playing monkey tricks which they called manœuvres, and there we two sat, Sherman in his pyjamas, I in the scantiest of dressing-gowns—‘All our faults observed, set in a note-book, learned and conned by rote.’ The view we presented to the busy ship’s crew must have been truly comic—for it was at least two o’clock in the morning, and one does not usually sit outside one’s house in such a costume at such an hour.

“I had a full taste then of limelight effect, and whenever I see a leading actor contorting under the glare of limelight I think of our night at Duxbury, and for quite a long time I smile at the recollection.”

I too smile with grim appreciation when I remember the incident, for Miss X—— was no sylph, neither was her husband.

To me, there is absolute noise in limelight—it bellows and it struts—it is like a brass band, disconcerting to player and audience, yet how beloved it is of both! It destroys the dream of a play—for, after all, a play is but a dream—why turn it into a nightmare? I admit in melodrama it is an essential, as are the muted strings in the orchestra

to passages of dialogue which even the least humorous of players often feels the need of, if that dialogue is to be listened to without a titter. But for plays that are plays, with dialogue that is thoughtful, and will carry on its own merits, neither limelight nor music is necessary. Still, lighting and music are great adjuncts, when judiciously used.

Those incomparable actors, the Irish players, don't pay half enough attention to lighting. They play the "Shadow of the Glen" and "Riders to the Sea" most impressively, but I don't think they light either of these plays realistically enough. Both plays are set in Irish kitchens: in "Riders to the Sea" it is mid-day, or at any rate early afternoon; there is one small window at the back of the stage, and a fire lighted with peat. This is the only light admissible in the cottage. Yet they manage to have as much on the stage as would come from a Coronation illumination. When the door is opened—which is frequently—there is no fresh supply of light from the outside, or if there is, the inside of the cottage is so generously supplied that it is not noticeable. You can't bottle up light and keep a store of it in a gloomy kitchen. It must come from the outside, and for the exigencies of playing the floats should be so checked as to

indicate darkness. This can quite well be done; keeping the semblance of darkness is all that lighting, in such a case, should be used for.

In the "Shadow of the Glen" it is night-time; there are two candles on the stage and the firelight. Here, again, the floats are half up, and the kitchen has about five times as much light as could possibly come from such meagre means.

I quote these two plays as they are the ones I know best in their repertoire.

Mr. Granville Barker understands lighting as no one else does on our stage. He never lights a scene from a dark corner; he never gives undue light, nor checks it when it is needed.

Not so in many other theatres I could name, where the lighting seems to come from all points of the compass. It is unreasonable, illogical, unnatural, miraculous. It is impossible in any one of these productions to find out which is the east or west of a garden—the moon comes from the front, and the window is at the back, candles aglare on the right throw as glaring a light on the left of the stage. All this is a bellowing fault.

But apart from mechanical stage lighting, there is within us all that desire to shine above the others. The limelight is in our blood—tinsel is our bullion—and we unconsciously strut, to the complete annihili-

lation of our sense of the ridiculous. You see, an actor has an inborn love of show, or he could not be an actor at all, and when an actor is a stage actor, he has that love of show satisfied to the full. Mentally, spiritually, he may be a philosopher, and with a great artist the real man dominates the artificial, but there are plenty of actors off the stage. The Church, the Bar, Medicine, and the Army are full of them.

I know a doctor whose bedside manner resembles that of any provincial actor playing the part of a great London specialist. His get-up (one can't call it dress) is the first indication of the amount of limelight he has swallowed. It is immaculate, from his pointed varnished boots to his side-whiskers. His voice never rises above a whisper, but has a cooing, sympathetic note in it. He feels one's pulse as if the whole world depended on its beat, and was anxiously waiting to hear the result of his calculation. His watch has a big, white face, and its tick is ominous. He prescribes gentle, harmless remedies, and smiles in a seductive, protective manner. But once outside the patient's room his whole attitude changes; he assumes authority, a stern countenance, an unbending severity towards the nurses who hold him in absolute awe. This man would have made an admirable actor-manager.

As it is, he is a very fine doctor—but he is theatrical for all that.

We all know what a quantity of “actor” clergymen there are—what would they not give for the pin-spot lime to prick them out when they ascend the pulpit—while the Army and the Bar are so full of these “actors” that it is difficult to imagine where their profession begins and their acting leaves off. It is incumbent, therefore, on the stage actor to bring all these theatrical methods to the plain representation of real life, and it is that I would have you, O Kings and Queens, to keep steadfastly in your minds.

Acting is a wonderful profession. It is so ephemeral. To-day it can be seen and heard—to-morrow it is gone for ever. Our work can only live in the memory, or in tradition. It is a profession, too, that belongs to another—seldom, if ever, to ourselves; it is the exclusive property of an audience. What, then, is there to bellow or strut about? We are simply entrusted with the words of an author, and must give them over to an audience as they are given to us. We are merely the middle-man.

But what does belong to us is the way we interpret the plays. And it is our duty and should be our pleasure to give all we can of ourselves

honestly to it, without any thought of the effect we personally produce. Indeed, I don't see myself what other methods there are. To play a part with "limelight" upon us is so stupid, so ignorant; our bodies are the physical expression of our minds, I suppose, but I am convinced that the mind or soul is not in our bodies, and no "limelight" will ever illuminate that which is invisible and alone gives vitality to our work.

How lightly we all go into this profession! It is a profession of faith. If we gain success it is always bought at a price too high to appreciate it—if we are unsuccessful it is a martyrdom of the most severe kind. Still, it lies in your power, O Kings and Queens, to beautify your work by an appreciation of the author's gift to you. You Hamlets, can't you possibly waive your right to the centre of the stage when you are not the centre of the scene? I am talking of your scene with Gertrude—the closet scene. It is hers, not yours—you have been facing the audience for two solid hours already. She has little or nothing to do, but it is her moment, it is the actress's only chance in the whole play. I would have the stage dark, and Hamlet emerge from the darkness, left or right. On a table, centre, there should be a lighted taper; this should be the only light on the stage, and should shine full on

Gertrude's face. It is her expression of fear that is needed by the audience, not yours. We have had your scene with the ghost before, and when he appears at the back you should deliberately turn towards him, and remain with your back to the audience all the time the ghost is on. The only face seen should be Gertrude's. Has a Hamlet ever been generous enough to Shakespeare, or to the lady playing Gertrude, to sacrifice himself to such an extent? Never ; and yet, as an artist, he owes it to both to obliterate himself at this moment. But not he ! he struts and bellows, and poor Gertrude has to disappear, as all the other characters of the play do, to give Hamlet the whole stage—limelight and all.

Some time ago I was rehearsing in a piece where, wonder of wonders ! all the parts were more or less equal. This was found to be a great oversight, and a " star " had to be erected in the horizon. So our parts were cut down, the principal was given an undue share of the centre of the stage. She was placed up stage, and the other characters grouped down in front of her, and by the time the piece was produced it was so out of focus as to be unrecognisable for the same delicious comedy we had started out to play. It is not always the players' fault, it is a little the fault of the audience, who, looking down a play-bill, pick out their favourites,

and go to see the piece they are performing in, and want them shown to them with all the trappings of stage glitter; but if they don't like the play—and how can they, when it is so distorted?—nothing will drag them to see it, however large their favourites are billed. So it happened to this comedy. It drew all London for about three or four weeks, then it began to be whispered that the play was dull, and the actors wasted on it. The play was brilliant, on the contrary, but it was out of shape, because it was played with a view to star one character, which was only a very good one among six others equally good.

The proscenium to a theatre is only the frame of a picture, and the players should be kept within that proscenium as rigidly as the subjects of a picture in their frame.

One great fault of production is that the producer, for the first three weeks, rehearses his play from the stage, and not from the auditorium. This is a mistake. He should paint his picture from a distance. He ought never to be so close to his pieces. He can't see the effect, and by the time he goes to the front of the house he has got so accustomed to his own production that he can no longer detect any fault in it. It is impossible to judge of the colour of a play except at a distance. There is a

Dutch painter in the National Gallery—I forget his name—whose pictures are uncompromisingly grey all over, except for one tiny speck of red which he introduces in the corner. I have in my mind a hunting scene—the sky is grey, the trees are grey, the riders and their horses and hounds are seen as through a grey mist, but in the left-hand corner there is a huntsman in a red coat, and, hey presto! the picture is full of colour. Now, had he painted his scene *in* the grey landscape, had the grey enveloped him as it did the riders, he would not have noticed that dash of colour which dominated the whole atmosphere of the picture. I am convinced he saw it from a distance; and so it is with stage productions. There is always a dash of scarlet somewhere, and to get it in exactly the right place it must be judged from a distance.

I must confess to a weakness for a very stagey adjunct to a play, and that is music, judiciously used. I don't mean the muted stuff played in the orchestra—that belongs to the “Corsican Brothers” type of play—but, to my mind, there is not half enough music introduced into spectacular plays. Since we have made such progress in stage carpentering scenery, and lighting, I should like more music used to help the players—especially in Shakespeare. There are places innumerable where the sonnets,

set to music, could be introduced, and not stop the action of the play for one second. It is a licence, I admit, but a very legitimate one. For instance, why should not the scene between Viola and Olivia be accompanied by viols and harps, off stage (not in the orchestra)? The speech, "Make me a willow cabin," cries out for music. We know Olivia loved music, since her clown makes sweet music right through the play. Might *he* not touch the strings once more to the ladies of Olivia's court, after they had been so unceremoniously turned out of the garden at Viola's entrance? Why should they and he not be on the stage even, singing to Olivia, when Malvolio comes to announce Viola's approach?

All this is legitimate, just as legitimate as bringing on a boar's head or a roast peacock at any of the Shakespeare feasts. But I would not have the music played in the orchestra. It should on the stage or in the wings.

Then there are modern plays in which music would be a great charm. We all know the effect of waltz music heard off stage, it will enhance the value of any dialogue. And there are many other scenes which would greatly benefit by music, if it could be introduced wisely and discreetly.

Many recitations can only be said to music. I

use music a great deal in my teaching, it gives an unconscious colour to the recitation.

Fortunately I improvise easily, and when I play loud the reciter raises his voice, when I play soft his voice becomes soft too. My pupils tell me that it is a great help to them. I readily believe it, for one can get a certain expression of emotion through the influence of music.

It is a great pity that music does not form part of the education of an actor. Music is an infallible guide to colour. You may see red, blue, and green, but if you want to express them emotionally nothing but a sense of music will give it you.

Music has the elements of every art. It has the colour of the painter's, the form of the sculptor's, the rhythm of the dancer's, the phrasing of the speaker's. No one who is a real lover of music can bellow and strut. It is inharmonious to do so, and if an actor is not an executant he ought to hear all the great things, and know them orally by heart. He should, if possible, attend orchestral rehearsals of the symphonies of Beethoven, the Masses, and the Passion music of Bach, Wagner, Verdi, Gounod, Ponchielli, Puccini, Mozart—any and all. Let him realise the use of every instrument, its individual place in the whole structure of the work, then he will appreciate the importance of every little part

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in a play, from him who "walks on" to the principal lady and gentleman. He is but one of the instruments of the author's work, necessary in his place, but wholly grotesque and out of tune once he steps out of the boundaries allotted to him by calling for limelight effects and the centre of the stage. My kings and queens, wear your crowns as halos, and by their unquenchable light illuminate the kingdoms you are called upon to rule and govern

Your affectionate

ROSINA MOTHER.

LETTER X

GAGGING ; SELFISHNESS ; FOOLING

“ And let those that play your clowns, speak no more than is set down for them ; for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too ; that’s villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it.”

TO MISS A. C.

MY DEAR A.,

You Columbine of Clowns ! do you read this ? “ For there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too.” If you only confined your clowning to amusing an audience one might forgive you, but you clown to make your fellow-actors laugh, and that’s unpardonable. Now the best training against clowning is to be up against it ; therefore musical comedy is the best school for you. There you see it at its worst—you experience its horrible effect—for fooling is quite legitimate in musical comedy—but only for the principal actor. When

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your principal laughs, and fools, and clowns, you have to stand perfectly still and immovable; the least little gesture from you will spoil the whole gag. It won't make *you* laugh, you will feel far too serious; for out of all this torrent of nonsense your own cue will suddenly be shot out, and woe betide you if you are not ready to take it up on the instant. The charm of musical comedy lies in the spontaneity of its chief actor, which he varies by his different moods. I had been on the stage many years before I went into musical comedy, and in musical comedy I learnt what I had never been able to acquire before in other forms of drama—to stand still; and who do you think taught it me? Mr. Seymour Hicks. I moved once during a gag of his, and the gag was lost.

“Resigner, you stupid old thing, don't you know you should never move while some one else is speaking?” said he, and for the first time in my life I understood how stillness was acquired—by keeping still while another spoke. I am grateful to him for many things, but for this in particular. I did not know before I worked with him that action comes from the speaker, not the listener, and I watched him play with new interest; this galvanised man, so full of fire, vitality, movement, *never* budes while some one else is speaking. He is as

still as a rock; he is the stillest actor I have ever played with, and when he is not acting in musical comedy it is a rare treat to play a quiet scene with him. Of course he gags appallingly, but if you bide your time, your cue will surely come, and he will give you ample scope to spout out yards of dialogue without so much as an eyelash moving to disconcert you.

By-play should never be used except in the place of dialogue: each movement of the actor has its allotted place; a gesture may be as eloquent as whole pages of words, but it must not muff the words, either of your part or that of any one else on the stage. Remember, that among the whole houseful of spectators, the audience has but one pair of eyes and ears and one brain, and these are fully occupied in attending to the principal action of the play. You only worry it by introducing irrelevant business.

Oh! the by-play of the amateur! how dreadful it is! and some actors, however much their names may flourish in big letters at the top of a play-bill, never lose this amateurish love of by-play. Upon my word, I prefer the acting of a chorus girl in a musical comedy to that of these smudgers. She uses first the right arm, and then the left arm, now the left leg, now the right leg, but at least her gestures

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and movements are in time. It gives a swing to the silly, meaningless music, and only your mind is distressed by such sad antics. There is a neatness and accuracy in her work totally lacking in that of the restless actor who would scorn to emulate the chorus girl's methods.

A little while ago I produced an opera; all the company were amateurs, so called, but by keenness and a good deal of stage knowledge they had none of the amateur tricks. They were a very earnest set of dilettantes, all but one, who to my horror at the last rehearsal, thinking probably to do much more with his part than I had allotted to him, pretended to dribble beer he was drinking on to his shirt-front. There was a good deal of by-play in the performance of this elegant business, and at that moment a very serious piece of work was being done by some one else. His prominent position on the stage, for he was quite close to the footlights, distracted the attention from the man who should have had all the attention of the audience. Delinquencies of this sort are simply the result of want of training, and unless an actor is trained, he will go on with these ugly tricks, till they develop into something much worse—selfishness. No thoroughly trained actor is ever selfish. I have only met three selfish creatures in all my

career, and in every case they were untrained actors ; their position on the stage gives me the lie direct, for they are all three in very much higher positions than I am on the stage, but they were never trained ; they have told me so themselves with evident pride. One of these persistently kept "up stage" during the entire scene I had with him ; I had to fix my eye on his, and put all the expression I had to portray in the middle of my back ; that was all the audience could see of me. I had to express cunning, determination, deception, terror, pleading, cajoling, cupidity, all in my shoulder-blades ; I can assure you I remember that man as one of the most selfish I have ever met.

Another never would wait till I had finished speaking, but nipped down on my last word but one. That was a smudgy thing to do ! Had she been trained she would not have done it for all the world, for she is a generous woman, it's only in her work she is selfish ; she doesn't know any better ; she doesn't do it to *me* alone, she does it every time she speaks. The third—oh ! that one is too awful to think of ; his offence is far worse, he breaks every laugh that belongs to another by some violent gesture. As surely as any one gets a laugh, he either claps his hands, or slaps his thigh, or sits down violently, or kicks a table,

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or upsets a chair. It's absolute agony to act a comedy scene with him. He is too stupid to do it spitefully, he is merely an untrained amateur with "a pitiful ambition," and is selfish enough to want to keep all the bonbons for himself, and there is no bonbon so toothsome as a hearty laugh from the audience; break some one's laugh and he is your enemy for life. I know I am savage when it happens to me. To do this actor justice, I don't believe he does it on purpose, I don't for a moment think he is malicious, though it looks uncommonly like it; I think it is simply want of training; a laugh upsets him, he doesn't know how to play with it. He doesn't understand that a comedy is a piece played by the cast of the play and an extra person, and that extra person is the audience; a laugh in the audience is the cue, not the word given on the stage. Others, on the other hand, play with a laugh too long and let it die out, and it's a herculean labour to pick up the comedy again. To deal successfully with a laugh is a very difficult thing, it requires a great deal of experience; there are some plays where the laugh comes from the pit and travels to the stalls, others where the laugh begins at the stalls and travels to the pit. These are two distinct species of laughter and require different treatment; in the first, you can wait a long time,

its death begins at about five rows of stalls from you; in the latter you musn't wait till it gets anywhere near the pit, you must hurry on with the play; there is an unmistakable wave of sound which warns you when the laugh is nearing its end.

I must say comedy to me is far more interesting to play than the serious drama. It is more wholesome to laugh than to cry, but it is far more difficult to command laughter than tears, and one runs the risk of meeting a selfish amateur in almost every comedy one plays in, but I am glad to say they are rare. Oh! the delicious moments of playing with Sir Herbert Tree! His subtle methods, his give-and-take, his generosity, his patience, and his good-humour in comedy! Three times I have experienced this camaraderie from him; never has he baulked me of one little privilege, but always given me ample scope to do my work with him. Indeed, as you know, it is to him I owe whatever position I now hold on the stage. He gave me my first work of any consequence—*Felise* in “*The Red Lamp*”—and my scenes were with him. He was as generous to me then as I have ever found him since, and I always have feelings of the deepest gratitude towards him. He could so easily have spoilt my work had he been selfish; I was a nobody—I had no name, and a very limited amount of talent, yet

he produced that scene with the greatest advantage to me. There was no going up stage and keeping me with my back to the audience, there was no blundering into my sentences before I had finished speaking them, no thumping of his thighs or smacking of his hands when the audience laughed at what I said ; on the contrary, he gave me a most generous help up the ladder of my profession.

It was the same with Mrs. John Wood. I was four years with her, and in all that time I never knew her do a selfish, mean bit of work. To every one, from the smallest part to the biggest, she always showed the greatest generosity.

I remember rehearsing "The Cabinet Minister," and Miss Monktrick—a tiny part in the fourth act—was hidden by the other characters. Mrs. John Wood stopped the rehearsal and insisted on her having the full privileges of her tiny scene. Sir Arthur Pinero was rehearsing the play with that love of minutiae so characteristic to his method of work, and he could say nothing—indeed, he didn't want to, it was so thoroughly just, and of such service to his play ; but many a management I have met with since would have smudged that scene, and it would have meant nothing. Now, as it happens, it is one of the most difficult scenes in

the whole play ; all the characters run in and out like rabbits, bringing Miss Monkitricks pieces of finery which the clumsy Joseph Lebanon has torn off in his dance with her. There are three distinct pieces of dialogue going on practically at the same time, and to keep these distinct requires very careful stage management. Miss Monkitricks is usually played by an inexperienced girl—the part is too small to admit of any other—but it has to be done briskly and full of life, and the difficulty is enhanced by the young creature's apparent inability to move except when other business of more importance than hers is being enacted. At that moment, she is a veritable catherine-wheel. It was beautifully done in our day at the Court Theatre, thanks to the generous hard work Mrs. Wood and Sir Arthur Pinero put into it ; but a selfish management would certainly have muffed it.

You, my dear A., are a very generous worker, but you *do* fool. Of course, in a long run it is very difficult not to ; for is there anything more monotonous than to play a part night after night, for months at a stretch, to an audience which individually may differ from that at the last performance, but collectively is just the same ? It

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is a receptive or an unreceptive audience, but it is always the same. Those Monday and Friday night audiences are certainly very trying, and being young you naturally turn to the drug that excites you most—clowning—wretched creature! How dreadful you can be! but it is one thing to be young and foolish, and another to be foolish and jejune. You won't always be a lively young thing; age *must* overtake you, like it does everybody else, and then your clowning will be a sad business. There is no fool like an old fool.

I have seen some very funny fooling in my time. I was in a fanciful play once. The heroine had to make tea for the hero, and the maid had to hand it to him. For fun, on one of those fatal Friday nights, the heroine dropped an artificial rose-leaf into the cup to make the hero laugh. In a second the liquid was turned into a bright scarlet. The hero did not notice this till he had drained the cup; but instead of the harmless joke coming off as she had meant, the hero, a very nervous man, thought he was poisoned. He spluttered, he spat, his eyes rolled in a terrifying manner, and he was with difficulty persuaded to go on with his play.

I am not sure your clown tricks are not as dangerous as this one. Of course, you looked

extremely funny standing outside the door which an unfortunate actor on the stage was to open suddenly, and through which he was to see an imaginary detective on the landing. If instead of the terror he had to express, he returned with a broad grin on his face, was he to blame? The apparition you presented to his gaze was as absurd and startling as it was unexpected. There you stood with your hair arranged as a moustache, a large man's overcoat buttoned up to your throat, and a silly billycock hat perched on the side of your head. Still, when taken as jokes, both the rose-leaf joke and yours, when analysed, are not *very* funny. It is only the fact of being brought up short in the middle of earnest work that causes the victims of this silly clowning to laugh. It is a nervous expression of fear. This laughter is seldom inspired by mirth, and only the tormentor experiences any joy at the success of a clownish trick. As for the audience, it is often very much offended, and always bewildered.

In America, when this treatment is presented to them, they will, with great dignity, leave the theatre, and the players, if they are not careful, may find themselves the only occupants of the building. One or two such lessons given to

you would save you, but I fear fooling is inborn in you, and that you may get worse. Remember you are a kitten at present. Don't grow into a skittish old cat—that's awful. I have met several, and, oddly enough, I, who laugh so easily on the stage, am never moved to laughter by clowning. It's only when something obviously funny and unpremeditated happens that I laugh, but it is always a matter of remorse to me having let such a thing bowl me over.

How deliciously serious some players are ! They can control voice and features and never show a ripple. I would give all my other experience to gain this seriousness. To do my students justice, while they are studying nothing upsets them. You were like that once when you were working so splendidly with me. What has given you this flippant touch? Is it success? If so, I have nothing to croak about. Go on fooling, for you are always charming, and the queen can do no wrong—at least, I know the public thinks you unimpeachable. So God bless you : be as merry as ever when next I have the good fortune to meet you in the same management. But I have taken a solemn oath you shall never make me laugh again.

Your affectionate

ROSINA MOTHER.

LETTER XI

MAKE-UP ; COSTUME ; SCENERY ; ARCHITECTURAL KNOWLEDGE

“Go, make you ready !”

MY DEARS,

Now you are ready to appear before your public ! The overture will soon be called ; the call-boy will knock at your door with the familiar “Half an hour, please.” Take my hint, don’t be at the theatre till then. Your dresser will have got everything ready, and no make-up, however elaborate, will need more than half an hour. It is hysterical to be in your dressing-room sooner. Mr. Cavendish Moreton’s invaluable book on the art of make-up will tell you everything you want to know on that subject, and it is very fully illustrated. *I* cannot tell you much about it, for I know next to nothing of “make-up.” A *very* little grease paint, a very little powder, the eyes very slightly shaded, no black on the eyelashes, no carmine on the lips, and very little dry rouge on the cheeks, ought to suffice, to my mind, for a straight make-up on a

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young face; even less is needed on an old one, except that in the case of a middle-aged woman the eyes should have deeper shading, there should be less rouge on the cheeks, but the lips will need a *good* deal of carmine. I am speaking of a female make-up. Men put a quantity of brick-dust coloured stuff on their face, which tastes sweet. They certainly look all right from the front of the house, but they are usually unrecognisable monsters near to. I don't understand the art of "make-up" at all. To me the expression of the face caused by the emotion of a part is all that an actor or actress usually needs.

The *head-dress* is what gives character to the face. If you want a heavy jowl, the hair screwed up tight to the temples, and built up high and hard, will give the lower part of the face a heavy look; if a slight chin and full upper part of the face is required, the hair waved out full at the temples and done low in the neck will achieve that result. The hair (even young hair) drawn back and smooth and scanty, with a droop of the whole body—face, neck, and shoulders—and a heavy walk from the thighs, will turn a young woman into an old one much more effectually than quantities of lines. Here, again, the mentality of the artist must dominate her physical requirements.

I know a girl, she is only sixteen, who has the talent of mimicry terribly developed. I have seen her impersonate a fashionable woman and an aged relative in the same costume, but by a change of expression, of carriage, of voice, of gesture, of walk, she gives two distinct performances. She gets at the heart of her characters by *mentally* visualising her impersonations. This bears out my theory that make-up is not an essential to the actress, especially to the character actress. Character is the soul of the player, and a straight ingénue part is as full of character as an old rag-picker's. With a man it is different, and again I recommend him to study Mr. Cavendish Moreton's book.

But let us first think of you as coming into your dressing-room to dress for the performance. Whether you have a room of your own, or whether you share it with others, the first duty is to *keep it tidy*. You must be very severe on this point with your dresser, and you must help her to carry out this rule. Your own clothes should be hung up neatly, your underclothes under your outer clothes, your hat above them, your gloves and trinkets also in a heap away from your theatrical things, your shoes out of sight. Your dressing-table should be neat *all* the evening, and your own space rigidly reserved from your

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neighbours. As soon as you have finished making-up, put away your grease paints, only leaving out the rouge and powder for use during the performance, and grease to take off your paint with at the end of it. Never wash your face before leaving the theatre, it is bad for the skin (unless you have been impersonating a negress, of course). Don't have many ornaments in your dressing-room. Remember the theatre is not a boudoir, it is your workshop, and should be treated as such; easy-chairs and lounges are a mistake. The theatre is not the place for delicate people, and all luxuries ought to be kept out of the dressing-rooms; flowers are nice, and dressers love them, but it is not very kind to the flowers, though they live longer in a dressing-room that never sees the light of day, than they do in one's own airy sitting-room at home. It is very perverse of them, but I am convinced they are not happy in a dressing-room, in spite of their longevity.

Also avoid taking rouge or powder with you to the stage. Most actresses do. The dressers urge you to take your puff and hare's-foot and mirror, as it amuses them to come down on the stage with you, but *their* proper place is in your dressing-room, *yours* on the stage. Mrs. John Wood once said to me, seeing me with my

attendant dresser rouging and powdering myself in the wings, "Filippi! haven't you got a dressing room?" "Yes," said I trembling, for there was a look in her eye which rather frightened me. "Then kindly make up *in* your room, and kindly *act* when you get down here."

Be very careful of the clothes provided for you by the theatre. They are usually very expensive things, in most cases far more expensive than your own. They have to last a long time, and need a great deal of care; as soon as one stitch is gone, get it repaired at once, insist on laces and frills being changed or cleaned as soon as they are the least little bit soiled.

Never eat or drink in your dressing-room; you are only three hours in the theatre, and surely you can go without food for three hours. Never send out your dresser during the evening except on the most exigent circumstances. Leave the theatre as soon as you possibly can when the play is over. Most dressers live a long way off, and it is cruel to keep them there while you dawdle. See yourself that she puts away your dresses neatly, and leave your dressing-table quite tidy; *put your toothbrush and sponge away*—hide them. God knows what cleaners do with brushes and sponges.

I don't know what advice to give *you*, my sons,

about your dressing-rooms, except this : don't play poker so much, and don't constantly send out for whiskies-and-sodas ; neither are good preparations for a night's work, and both cost a good deal of money.

Both men and women should study costume. A man ought, and generally does, know all the details of romantic costume ; indeed, my experience is that men are much more sound in the matter of costume than women. It is perfectly appalling how ignorant most girls are about what they call "fancy dress." It is generally a matter of pride to the stage aspirant that she can't sew. It is far more disgraceful for her that she should not be able to do so than for an ordinary young lady of society. She not only ought to be able to sew, but she ought to be competent to cut out and make *any* costume, other than modern dress. She should thoroughly know the science of period ; especially the head-dress. The "becoming" is a frightful pitfall. She must get her head right at whatever cost ; it is that, and that alone, which gives character to the whole costume, and if it is *right* it *will* be becoming, for women have always taken care of that ; and though a wimple is not our modern notion of "becoming," the modern fluffed-out hair will make a girl look common and out of proportion if a wimple is what she ought to be wearing at the time.

When we played "Arms and the Man" at the Savoy Theatre Miss Lillah Macarthy wore a dress of the year 1870. The first impression of the costume was a most amusing one. She wore a three-flounced lace dress over a large bustle, a short velvet bodice, and a ridiculous little hat, but as the scene progressed the eye got so accustomed to the dress that one wondered why women didn't still wear such becoming clothes. She looked lovely in it because it was just right.

The best place to study costume is, of course, the National Gallery. Every room is a wardrobe full of the most beautiful costumes; colour, form, texture are all spread out before you, with *real* people inside them to show you how to wear them.

Included in this knowledge of costume should be the knowledge of scenery. This for men is a most interesting subject, and for women too, although they cannot actually make it or put it up. Again the picture-galleries will be your best guide. I don't believe the building of a scene should be architectural, it ought to be pictorial purely and simply. It is a matter of perspective; a castle on the stage is only eight or ten feet high, and it has to look perhaps like the Castle of Wolfenbach. How a young man can go on the stage without any kind of training or study astonishes me. I have played with

men who knew nothing of the literature of the stage, nor the traditions of the stage, nor of costume, nor of deportment, nor the names of the simplest mechanisms used, nor of scene-painting, nor scene-setting, nor materials used; they have never gone up into the flies; they don't even know on what principle the curtain is rung up and down; they know nothing of the gradations of colour used in lighting, and the same men will be completely upset by a different position of a chair or the absence of the most unimportant property.

Mais nous allons changer tout ça, my sons; *you* thirst after knowledge, and when your mind turns to scenic problems I positively love you.

P——, do you remember that suit of Heart cards you painted for “Alice in Wonderland”? What a very large quantity of red paint you used, to be sure; and the tent you put up for “Whitewashing Julia,” was it time wasted? When you got to South Africa, didn't that enthusiasm you expended on our modest performances stand you in very good stead, and are you not worth a thousand times more than the loafers you left behind you in this country?

You, B.A. of Oxford, what a genius you are! The last time I saw you, you were an unrecognisable mass of blue paint. You looked like an early Briton all covered with woad, but the result of all this blue

mess was very wonderful to behold. You painted a lonely glen, and a lonely glen it was. Mind, there are not *many* as gifted as you are in stage craft, but there is no earthly reason why every young actor should not study this particular branch of our work. To hear you give directions in stage jargon, with a cultivated, gentlemanly voice, is one of the pleasantest experiences I have ever had. And the scenery you have painted for me has always been the most satisfactory I have ever put up. I shall one day hear of your theatre, and the knowledge and imagination you show now will make your productions of the future very wonderful things indeed. But do use a little red among your blues; blue alone is so cold and hard, and the tiniest speck of red, especially in the floats, gives a greater clearness to the whole effect. I know there is no red in Nature's moonlight, but stage moonlight *absolutely* needs it. We have discussed this before, and I have always come out of the argument maimed, and weak enough to yield to your arbitrary use of uncompromising blue, because *you* say there is nothing to account for that warm glow from the *ground*. I grant that, but it throws a colour upon the face of the actors and shows up expression, which blue alone entirely obliterates.

As we draw near to the end of these letters I

wonder rather anxiously whether I have written a great deal of nonsense. A little is only natural. My own knowledge is so limited, "I only speak right on, and tell you that which you yourselves do know," and to be tied down to write a book on the most illusive of all the arts requires either a great supply of the sense of humour or none at all.

One thing I do know, you and I have been very much in earnest in our work together, and it has been one of the greatest joys of my theatrical life to see your talents develop, till I could safely say to you all—

"Go, make you ready!"

Your affectionate

MOTHER ROSINA FILIPPI.

LETTER XII

“GOODBYE!”

IF you have had the patience to read the foregoing letters and are still kind enough to read this one, let me hasten to assure you “that I can easier teach twenty what were good to do, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching.”

I know *nothing* of the art I am supposed to teach, and please exonerate me from the accusation that I ever do teach. It is you who have taught me. It is you who have shown me what not to do (forgive my little joke), but in all seriousness I truly have learnt more from you than ever you have from me.

I have an inborn love of the young, as you know, and your youth has kept me young too; so that when you emerged from your chrysalides to become beautiful butterflies, instead of a spectacled old entomologist, as I ought to be by now, I still remain a fussy etymologist. I still babble foolishly over the study of words and syllables. The line I like best in all “Hamlet” is his answer to Polonius, when asked by him what it was he read—

“Words, words, words.”

142 HINTS TO SPEAKERS AND PLAYERS

I should like to know the dictionary by heart ; the mere sound of those long columns of words has a most soothing effect on me. I open the book at random ; here is a line of words that positively rings with sound ; it is metallic, like a Salvation Army brass band—

Kale

Kaleidoscope

Kalendar (though I never saw it spelt like that before)

Kali

Kalif

Kangaroo

Kaw

Keckle

Kedge

Keel

Keelage

Keelhaul

Keeling

Keelson

Keen

Keep

Keepsake

Kennel

Kentledge

Ketch

Kettle

and all the funny inadequate descriptions given of each by a compiler so shy of being accused of showing any imagination, that your own has to go on a long journey with each word. For instance, Keckle he describes as a "term in navigation." Does the captain order the mate to keckle the star-board, or does it swing between decks, or drag on a rope behind the ship, or is it a brass button on a reefer-coat? What is a keckle? Whatever it is, it is a difficult word to say, and sounds more like an encouragement to a lagging horse. Then, again, it seems to me very frivolous to inscribe the word "Kaw" in a dictionary at all, as it essentially belongs to bird language. The picture the word evokes is a little church near Oxford with a huge oak-tree before it, full of rooks that call to each other at sunset, and flap their great black wings over the belfry, till you can't see the sky for them. The compiler describes the word as "croaking." It doesn't seem to mean that to me; it means maternal love and paternal authority, citizenship, and police regulations, the law of traffic, and science of mathematics, the wealth and commonwealth of a feathered colony in the huge branches of that splendid old tree.

The other day a little boy, staying with me, answered the telephone; the person at the other

end was a French lady, and this is what I heard of the conversation from him—

“ *Oui, Madame.*”

“ *A cinque heures, Madame.*” Then, turning to me, he said, “ Here, somebody fetch me a dictionary, quick.”

I quote this story to illustrate the use of a dictionary in practical matters.

And now, God bless you all. After this letter comes a collection, first of tiresome exercises, which we shall all be the better for doing, every one of us, and which we *all* need, however good a speaker we may individually be ; and then a few isolated gems which we shall all be the better for knowing by heart. Whether *all* audiences would appreciate them as recitations I do not know, but most audiences love them, and I cannot think but a store of these in one’s brain will while away many a tedious hour. They develop memory, imagination, and understanding—three invaluable mental equipments to the public speaker.

Yours, ever and ever,

ROSINA FILIPPI.

PART II

EXERCISES

I

DICTION, VOWELS, AND SYLLABLES

EXERCISE 1.—VOWELS.

Each vowel has two syllables, as—

A	pronounced	eh—ee
E	„	ee—er
I	„	eye—ee
O	„	oh—oo
U	„	ee—yew

EXERCISE 2.—VOWELS WITH CONSONANTS.

SYLLABICS.

B—A	-	-	-	bay
B—E	-	-	-	bee
Bay	-	-	-	bee
B—I	-	-	-	by
Bay	-	-	-	bee—by

B—O - - - bo
 Bay—bee—by—bo
 B—U - - bew
 Bay—bee—by—bo—bew.

D—A - - - day
 D—E - - - dee
 Day—dee
 D—I - - - die
 Day—dee—die
 D—O - - - doe
 Day—dee—die—doe
 D—U - - - dew
 Day—dee—die—doe—dew

L—A - - - lay
 L—E - - - lee
 Lay—lee
 L—I - - - lie
 Lay—lee—lie
 L—O - - - low
 Lay—lee—lie—low
 L—U - - - lew
 Lay—lee—lie—low—lew

R—A - - - ray
 R—E - - - ree
 Ray—ree
 R—I - - - rye
 Ray—ree—rye

R—O - - - ro

Ray—ree—rye—ro

R—U - - - rew

Ray—ree—rye—ro—rew

S—A - - - say

S—E - - - see

Say—see

S—I - - - sigh

Say—see—sigh

S—O - - - so

Say—see—sigh—so

S—U - - - see—ew

Say—see—sigh—so—see—ew

T—A - - - tay

T—E - - - tee

Tay—tee

T—I - - - tie

Tay—tee—tie

T—O - - - toe

Tay—tee—tie—toe

T—U - - - tew

Tay—tee—tie—toe—tew

EXERCISE 3.

B—A—B - - bab

B—E—B - - beb

Bab—beb

148 HINTS TO SPEAKERS AND PLAYERS

B—I—B - - bib

Bab—beb—bib

B—O—B - - bob

Bab—beb—bib—bob

B—U—B - - bub

Bab—beb—bib—bob—bub

D—A—B - - dab

D—E—B - - deb

Dab—deb

D—I—B - - dib

Dab—deb—dib

D—O—B - - dob

Dab—deb—dib—dob

D—U—B - - dub

Dab—deb—dib—dob—dub

L—A—B - - lab

L—E—B - - leb

Lab—leb

L—I—B - - lib

Lab—leb—lib

L—O—B - - lob

Lab—leb—lib—lob

L—U—B - - lub

Lab—leb—lib—lob—lub

R—A—B - - rab

R—E—B - - reb

Rab—reb

R—I—B - rib

Rab—reb—rib

R—O—B - - rob

Rab—reb—rib—rob

R—U—B - - rub

Rab—reb—rib—rob—rub

S—A—B - - sab

S—E—B - - seb

Sab—seb

S—I—B - - sib

Sab—seb—sib

S—O—B - - sob

Sab—seb—sib—sob

S—U—B - - sub

Sab—seb—sib—sob—sub

T—A—B - - tab

T—E—B - - teb

Tab—teb

T—I—B - - tib

Tab—teb—tib

T—O—B - - tob

Tab—teb—tib—tob

T—U—B - - tub

Tab—teb—tib—tob—tub

W—A—B - - wab

W—E—B - - web

Wab—web

W—I—B - - wib

Wab—web—wib

150 HINTS TO SPEAKERS AND PLAYERS

W—O—B - - wob

Wab—web—wib—wob

W—U—B - - wub

Wab—web—wib—wob—wub

EXERCISE 4.

B—A—D - - bad

B—E—D - - bed

Bad—bed

B—I—D - - bid

Bad—bed—bid

B—O—D - - bod

Bad—bed—bid—bod

B—U—D - - bud

Bad—bed—bid—bod—bud

D—A—D - - dad

D—E—D - - ded

Dad—ded

D—I—D - - did

Dad—ded—did

D—O—D - - dod

Dad—ded—did—dod

D—U—D - - dud

Dad—ded—did—dod—dud

L—A—D - - lad

L—E—D - - led

Lad—led

L—I—D - - lid

Lad—led—lid

L—O—D - - lod

Lad—led—lid—lod

L—U—D - - lud

Lad—led—lid—lod—lud

R—A—D - - rad

R—E—D - - red

Rad—red

R—I—D - - rid

Rad—red—rid

R—O—D - - rod

Rad—red—rid—rod

R—U—D - - rud

Rad—red—rid—rod—rud

S—A—D - - sad

S—E—D - - sed

Sad—sed

S—I—D - - sid

Sad—sed—sid

S—O—D - - sod

Sad—sed—sid—sod

S—U—D - - sud

Sad—sed—sid—sod—sud

T—A—D - - tad

T—E—D - - ted

Tad—ted

T—I—D - - tid

Tad—ted—tid

T—O—D - - tod

Tad—ted—tid—tod

T—U—D - - tud

Tad—ted—tid—tod—tud

W—A—D - - wad

W—E—D - - wed

Wad—wed

W—I—D - - wid

Wad—wed—wid

W—O—D - - wod

Wad—wed—wid—wod

W—U—D - - wud

Wad—wed—wid—wod—wud

EXERCISE 5.

B—A—L - - bal

B—E—L - - bell

Bal—bell

B—I—L - - bill

Bal—bell—bill

B—O—L - - bol

Bal—bell—bill—bol

B—U—L - - bull

Bal—bell—bill—bol—bull

D—A—L - - dal

D—E—L - - dell

Dal—dell

D—I—L - - dill

Dal—dell—dill

D—O—L - - doll
 Dal—dell—dill—doll
 D—U—L - - dull
 Dal—dell—dill—doll—dull

L—A—L - - lal
 L—E—L - - lel
 Lal—lel
 L—I—L - - lil
 Lal—lel—lil
 L—O—L - - lol
 Lal—lel—lil—lol
 L—U—L - - lull
 Lal—lel—lil—lol—lull

R—A—L - - ral
 R—E—L - - rel
 Ral—rel
 R—I—L - - rill
 Ral—rel—rill
 R—O—L - - rol
 Ral—rel—rill—rol
 R—U—L - - rull
 Ral—rel—rill—rol—rul

S—A—L - - sal
 S—E—L - - sell
 Sal—sell
 S—I—L - - sill
 Sal—sell—sill

S—O—L - - sol

Sal—sell—sill—sol

S—U—L - - sull

Sal—sell—sill—sol—sull

T—A—L - - tal

T—E—L - - tell

Tal—tell

T—I—L - - till

Tal—tell—till

T—O—L - - tol

Tal—tell—till—tol

T—U—L - - tull

Tal—tell—till—tol—tull

W—A—L - - wal

W—E—L - - well

Wal—well

W—I—L - - will

Wal—well—will

W—O—L - - wol

Wol—well—will—wol

W—U—L - - wull

Wal—well—will—wol—wull

EXERCISE 6.

B—A—R - - bar

B—E—R - - bur

Bar—bur

B—I—R - - bur

Bar—bur—bur

B—O—R - - bor

Bar—bur—bur—bor

B—U—R - - bur

Bar—bur—bur—bor—bur

D—A—R - - dar

D—E—R - - dur

Dar—dur

D—I—R - - dur

Dar—dur—dur

D—O—R - - dor

Dar—dur—dur—dor

D—U—R - - dur

Dar—dur—dur—dor—dur

L—A—R - - lar

L—E—R - - lur

Lar—lur

L—I—R - - lur

Lar—lur—lur

L—O—R - - lor

Lar—lur—lur—lor

L—U—R - - lur

Lar—lur—lur—lor—lur

R—A—R - - rar

R—E—R - - rur

Rar—rur

156 HINTS TO SPEAKERS AND PLAYERS

R—I—R - - rur

Rar—rur—rur

R—O—R - - ror

Rar—rur—rur—ror

R—U—R - - rur

Rar—rur—rur—ror—rur

S—A—R - - sar

S—E—R - - sir

Sar—sir

S—I—R - - sir

Sar—sir—sir

S—O—R - - sor

Sar—sir—sir—sor

S—U—R - - sir

Sor—sir—sir—sor—sir

T—A—R - - tar

T—E—R - - tur

Tar—tur

T—I—R - - tur

Tar—tur—tur

T—O—R - - tor

Tar—tur—tur—tor

T—U—R - - tur

Tar—tur—tur—tor—tur

W—A—R - - wah

W—E—R - - wur

Wah—wur

W—I—R - - wur
 Wah—wur—wur
 W—O—R - - wor
 Wah—wur—wur—wor
 W—U—R - - wur
 Wah—wur—wur—wor—wur

EXERCISE 7.

B—A—S - - bas
 B—E—S - - bess
 Bas—bess
 B—I—S - - biss
 Bas—bess—biss
 B—O—S - - boss
 Bas—bess—biss—boss
 B—U—S - - buss
 Bas—bess—biss—boss—buss

D—A—S - - dass
 D—E—S - - dess
 Dass—dess
 D—I—S - - diss
 Dass—dess—diss
 D—O—S - - doss
 Dass—dess—diss—doss
 D—U—S - - duss
 Dass—dess—diss—doss—duss

L—A—S - - lass
 L—E—S - - less
 Lass—less

158 HINTS TO SPEAKERS AND PLAYERS

L—I—S - - liss

Lass—less—liss

L—O—S - - loss

Lass—less—liss—loss

L—U—S - - lus

Lass—less—liss—loss—lus

R—A—S - - rass

R—E—S - - ress

Rass—ress

R—I—S - - riss

Rass—ress—riss

R—O—S - - ross

Rass—ress—riss—ross

R—U—S - - russ

Rass—ress—riss—ross—russ

T—A—S - - tass

T—E—S - - tess

Tass—tess

T—I—S - - tiss

Tass—tess—tiss

T—O—S - - toss

Tass—tess—tiss—toss

T—U—S - - tuss

Tass—tess—tiss—toss—tuss

W—A—S - - wass

W—E—S - - wess

Wass—wess

W—I—S . . . wiss
 Wass—wess—wiss
 W—O—S . . . woss
 Wass—wess—wiss—woss
 W—U—S . . . wuss
 Wass—wess—wiss—woss—wuss

EXERCISE 8.

B—A—T . . . bat
 B—E—T . . . bet
 Bat—bet
 B—I—T . . . bit
 Bat—bet—bit
 B—O—T . . . bott
 Bat—bet—bit—bott
 B—U—T . . . but
 Bat—bet—bit—bott—but

 D—A—T . . . dat
 D—E—T . . . det
 Dat—det
 D—I—T . . . dit
 Dat—det—dit
 D—O—T . . . dott
 Dat—det—dit—dott
 D—U—T . . . dutt
 Dat—det—dit—dott—dut

 L—A—T . . . lat
 L—E—T . . . let
 Lat—let

160 HINTS TO SPEAKERS AND PLAYERS

L—I—T - - lit

Lat—let—lit

L—O—T - - lot

Lat—let—lit—lot

L—U—T - - lut

Lat—let—lit—lot—lut

R—A—T - - rat

R—E—T - - ret

Rat—ret

R—I—T - - rit

Rat—ret—rit

R—O—T - - rot

Rat—ret—rit—rot

R—U—T - - rut

Rat—ret—rit—rot—rut

S—A—T - - sat

S—E—T - - set

Sat—set

S—I—T - - sit

Sat—set—sit

S—O—T - - sot

Sat—set—sit—sot

S—U—T - - sudd

Sat—set—sit—sot—sudd

T—A—T - - tat

T—E—T - - tet

Tat—tet

T—I—T . . . tit
 Tat—tet—tit
 T—O—T . . . tot
 Tat—tet—tit—tot
 T—U—T . . . ut
 Tat—tet—tit—tot—tut

W—A—T . . . wat
 W—E—T . . . wet
 Wat—wet
 W—I—T . . . wit
 Wat—wet—wit
 W—O—T . . . what
 Wat—wet—wit—what
 W—U—T . . . wut
 Wat—wet—wit—what—wut

EXERCISE 9.

B—A—B . . . bab
 B—A—D . . . bad
 Bab—bad
 B—A—L . . . bal
 Bab—bad—bal
 B—A—R . . . bar
 Bab—bad—bal—bar
 B—A—S . . . bas
 Bab—bad—bal—bar—bas
 B—A—T . . . bat
 Bab—bad—bal—bar—bas—bat

B—E—B - - beb

B—E—D - - bed

Beb—bed

B—E—L - - bel

Beb—bed—bel

B—E—R - - bur

Beb—bed—bel—bur

B—E—S - - bess

Beb—bed—bel—bur—bess

B—E—T - - bet

Beb—bed—bel—bur—bess—bet

B—I—B - - bib

B—I—D - - bid

Bib—bid

B—I—L - - bill

Bib—bid—bill

B—I—R - - bur

Bib—bid—bill—bur

B—I—S - - biss

Bib—bid—bill—bur—biss

B—I—T - - bit

Bib—bid—bill—bur—biss—bit

B—I—B - - bib

B—I—D - - bid

Bib—bid

B—I—L - - bill

Bib—bid—bill

B—I—R • • bur

Bib—bid—bill—bur

B—I—S - - biss

Bib—bid—bill—bur—biss

B—I—T - - bit

Bib—bid—bill—bur—biss—bit

B—O—B - - bob

B—O—D - - bod

Bob—bod

B—O—L - - boll

Bob—bod—boll

B—O—R - - bore

Bob—bod—boll—bore

B—O—S - - boss

Bob—bod—boll—bore—boss

B—O—T - - bott

Bob—bod—boll—bore—boss—bott

B—U—B - - bub

B—U—D - - bud

Bub—bud

B—U—L - - bul

Bub—bud—bul

B—U—R - - bur

Bub—bud—bul—bur

B—U—S - - buss

Bub—bud—bul—bur—buss

B—U—T - - but

Bub—bud—bul—bur—buss—but

Substitute the letters D—L—R—S—T—W for the letter B, which begins this exercise, keeping the Vowels in their order.

EXERCISE 10.

B—A—B - - bab
 B—E—B - - beb
 Bab—beb
 B—A—D - - bad
 B—E—D - - bed
 Bab—bed—bad—bed
 B—I—B - - bib
 B—I—D - - bid
 Bab—bed—bad—bed—bib—bid
 B—O—B - - bob
 B—O—D - - bod
 Bab—bed—bad—bed—bib—bid—bob—bod
 B—U—B - - bub
 B—U—D - - bud
 Bab—bed—bad—bed—bib—bid—bob—bod
 —bub—bud

EXERCISE 11.

B—A—B - - bab
 B—E—B - - beb
 Bab—beb
 B—A—D - - bad
 B—E—D - - bed
 Bab—bed—bad—bed
 B—A—L - - bal
 B—E—L - - bell
 Bab—beb—bad—bed—bal—bell
 B—A—S - - bass

B—E—S - - - bess

Bab—beb—bad—bed—bal—bell—bass—bess

B—A—T - - - bat

B—E—T - - - bet

Bab—beb—bad—bed—bal—bell—bass—bess

—bat—bet

Substitute for the letter B the letters D, L, S, T, W,
keeping the vowels in their order.

EXERCISE 12.

B—A—B - - - bab

B—E—B - - - beb

B—I—B - - - bib

Bab—beb—bib

B—A—D - - - bad

B—E—D - - - bed

B—I—D - - - bid

Bab—beb—bid—bad—bed—bid

B—A—L - - - bal

B—E—L - - - bell

B—I—L - - - bill

Bab—beb—bib—bad—bed—bid—bal—bell—
bill

B—A—S - - - bass

B—E—S - - - bess

B—I—S - - - biss

Bab—beb—bib—bad—bed—bid—bal—bell—
bill—bass—bess—biss

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B—A—T - - bat

B—E—T - - bet

B—I—T - - bit

Bab—beb—bib—bad—bed—bid—bal—bell—
bill—bass—bess—biss—bat—bet—bit

Substitute for the letter B, the letters D, L, S, T, W,
keeping the vowels in their order.

EXERCISE 13.

B—A—B - - bab

B—E—D - - bed

Bab—bed

B—I—L - - bill

Bab—bed—bill

B—O—R - - bore

Bab—bed—bill—bore

B—U—SS - - buss

Bab—bed—bill—bore—buss

B—U—T - - but

Bab—bed—bill—bore—buss—but

Please exaggerate the importance of this exercise.
Use your lips, and substitute the letters D, L, R, S, T,
and W for B, keeping the vowels in their order.

CURE FOR A GUTTERAL R.

EXERCISE 14.

As quickly as you can possibly get it :—

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.

Did Peter Piper pick a peck of pickled peppers ?

Yes. Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.
If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers,
Where's the peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper
picked?

Rule, Britannia. Britannia Rules the Waves.

CURE FOR A LISP.

EXERCISE 15.

Love me in London,
Love me in town.
Love me, oh ! love me
In and out, up and down.

Now say with teeth closely shut together—

Lisbon is spliced to Spain.

II

BREATHING EXERCISES

Inhale with the mouth shut, counting		
Hold the breath,	„	6
Exhale through the mouth,	„	6
Hold the breath,	„	6

WHILE doing this exercise keep the arms down by the side ; do not stiffen. Take the breath from the diaphragm. Do not raise the shoulders. The ribs should expand.

To put this exercise into practice, use the same methods, but be careful when breathing with the mouth shut not to snort through the nose. It must be done *very* quietly—very imperceptibly. In time you will be able to breathe through your nose with your mouth open. The snapping to of the mouth as you breathe through your nose is ridiculous, and belongs to the Ella Kew-Shun methods.

(*Breathe.*) “ Many a time and oft have you climbed up to walls and battlements, to towers and windows, yea, to chimney-tops, your infants in your arms, and there have sat the livelong day in patient expectation to see great Pompey pass the streets of Rome. (*Breathe.*)

“And when you saw his *chariot* but appear, have you not made an universal shout that Tiber trembled underneath her banks to hear the replications of your sounds made in her concave shores ! (*Breathe.*)

“And do you now put on your best attire (*breathe*), and do you now cull out a holiday (*breathe*), and do you now strew flowers in his way that comes in triumph over Pompey’s blood ? Begone. (*Breathe.*) Run to your houses, fall upon your knees and pray to the gods to intermit the plague that needs must fall for this ingratitude.”—“Julius Cæsar” (*Shakespeare*).

(*Breathe.*) “If thou cuts more or less than a just pound (*breathe*), be it but so much as makes it light or heavy in the substance, or the division of the twentieth part of one poor scruple, nay, if the scale do turn but in the estimation of a hair—(*breathe*) thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate.”—“Merchant of Venice” (*Shakespeare*).

There is a very big crescendo from “be it but so much” to “of a hair” which makes this breathing exercise a difficult one, but it is eminently satisfactory to achieve it in one breath.

(*Breathe.*) “He defied our Russian commanders—acted without orders—led the charge on his own responsibility—headed it himself—was the first man to sweep through their guns—can’t you see it, Raina?—our gallant splendid Bulgarians with their swords and eyes flashing, thundering down like an avalanche and scattering the wretched Servians and their dandified Austrian officers like chaff—and you—(*breathe*) you kept Servius

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waiting a year before you would be betrothed to him " (*breathe*).—" Arms and the Man " (*Bernard Shaw*).

This speech must be said with a tremendous crescendo. The words flashing, thundering, avalanche, and chaff must stand out from the rest like streaks of lightning. N.B.—There is no European language where the word is so graphic as in English.

A Flash means a flash.

Splash. You can hear the sound caused by the act of splashing.

Thunder means thunder.

Move has motion in it.

Cheap has no monetary value.

Deep has no bottom.

Pit has no top.

And so on. The graphic character of the words is, I am sure, the reason why the English use no gesture. The words need no illustration. Ah ! it is a God-sent language.

III

WHISPERING EXERCISES

GREECE TO SLAVERY.

"LET there be Light ! said Liberty (*breathe*). And like Sunrise from the sea Athens arose (*breathe*). Around her born, (*breathe*) Shone like mountains in the morn. Glorious states ; (*breathe*) and are they now ashes, wrecks, oblivion ? (*breathe*). Go, where Thermæ and Asopus swallowed Persia (*breathe*) as the sand does foam. (*Breathe*).

"Deluge upon deluge followed. (*Breathe.*) Discord, Macedon, and Rome, (*breathe*) and lastly thou, (*breathe*) temples and towers, (*breathe*) citadels and marts, (*breathe*) and they who live and die there (*breathe*) have been ours, and may be thine and must decay ; (*breathe*) but Greece and her foundations (*breathe*) are built below the tide of war, (*breathe*) based on the crystalline sea of thought and its eternity, (*breathe*) her citizens, imperial spirits, (*breathe*) rule the present from the past. (*Breathe.*) On all that world of men inherits their seal is set " (*breathe*).—"Hellas" (*Shelley*).

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If the student feels dizzy doing this exercise he must leave off at once and wait until the feeling has passed, but the more he feels dizzy the more he needs it.

“How if—when I am laid into the tomb—I wake before the time that Romeo come to redeem me? There’s a fearful point!

“Shall I not then be stifled in the vault, to whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in, and there die strangled ere my Romeo comes?

“Or if I live is it not very like the horrible conceit of night, together with the terror of the place, as in a vault, an ancient receptacle, where, for these many hundred years, the bones of all my buried ancestors are pack’d; where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth, lies festering in his shroud; where, as they say, at some hours of the night spirits resort;

“Alack, alack, is it not like, that I, so early waking, what with loathsome smells and shrieks, like mandrakes’ torn out of the earth, that living mortals, hearing them, run mad;—Oh! if I wake shall I not be distraught, environed with all these hideous fears? and madly play with my forefathers’ joints? and pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud? and in this rage, with some great kinsman’s bone, as with a club, dash out my desperate brains?

“Oh, look! methinks I see my cousin’s ghost seeking out Romeo, that did spit *his* body upon a rapier’s point.—Stay, Tybalt, stay!”

IV

SPEED AND CLEARNESS

EXERCISES FROM THE POEMS AND WRITINGS OF
R. SOUTHEY, FATHER PROUT, DION BOUCICAULT,
LEIGH HUNT

Exercise I.

THE FALLS OF LODORE.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

I.

“How does the Water
Come down at Lodore?”
My little boy asked me
Thus once on a time;
And, moreover, he task'd me
To tell him in rhyme.
Anon at the word,
There first came one daughter
And then came another,
To second and third
The request of their brother,
And to hear how the Water
Comes down at Lodore,
With its rush and its roar,

As many a time
 They had seen it before,
 So I told them in rhyme.
 For of rhymes I had store :
 And 'twas in my vocation
 For their recreation
 That so I should sing ;
 Because I was Laureate
 To them and the King.

II.

From its sources which well
 In the Tarn on the fell ;
 From its fountains
 In the mountains,
 Its rills and its gills ;
 Through moss and through brake
 It runs and it creeps
 For awhile, till it sleeps
 In its own little Lake.
 And thence at departing,
 Awakening and starting,
 It runs through the reeds
 And away it proceeds
 Through meadow and glade,
 In sun and in shade,
 And through the wood-shelter.
 Among crags in its flurry
 Helter-skelter,
 Hurry-scurry,
 Here it comes sparkling,

And there it lies darkling ;
Now smoking and frothing
Its tumult and wrath in,
Till in this rapid race
On which it is bent,
It reaches the place
Of its steep descent.

III.

The cataract strong
Then plunges along,
Striking and raging
As if a war waging,
Its caverns and rocks among ;
Rising and leaping,
Sinking and creeping,
Swelling and sweeping,
Showering and springing,
Flying and flinging,
Writhing and ringing,
Eddying and whisking,
Spouting and frisking,
Turning and twisting
Around and around
With endless rebound !
Smiting and fighting,
A sight to delight in ;
Confounding, astounding,
Dizzying and deafening the ear
with its sound.
Collecting, projecting,

Receding and speeding,
And shocking and rocking,
And darting and parting,
And threading and spreading,
And whizzing and hissing,
And dripping and skipping,
And hitting and splitting,
And shining and twining,
And rattling and battling,
And shaking and quaking,
And pouring and roaring,
And waving and raving,
And tossing and crossing,
And flowing and going,
And running and stunning,
And foaming and roaming,
And dinning and spinning,
And dropping and hopping,
And working and jerking,
And guggling and struggling,
And heaving and cleaving,
And moaning and groaning,
And glittering and frittering,
And gathering and feathering,
And whitening and brightening,
And quivering and shivering,
And hurrying and skurrying,
And thundering and floundering,
Dividing and gliding and sliding,
And falling and brawling and sprawling,

And driving and riving and striving,
And sprinkling and twinkling and wrinkling,
And sounding and bounding and rounding,
And bubbling and troubling and doubling,
And grumbling and rumbling and tumbling,
And clattering and battering and shattering,
Retreating and beating and meeting and sheeting,
Delaying and straying and playing and spraying,
Advancing and prancing and glancing and dancing,
Recoiling, turmoiling and toiling and boiling,
And gleaming and streaming and steaming and beaming,
And rushing and flushing and brushing and gushing,
And flapping and rapping and clapping and slapping,
And curling and whirling and purling and twirling,
And thumping and plumping and bumping and jumping,
And dashing and flashing and splashing and clashing,
And so never ending, but always descending,
Sounds and motions for ever and ever are blending,
All at once and all o'er, with a mighty uproar,
And this way the Water comes down at Lodore.

Exercise II.

THE SHANDON BELLS.

FATHER PROUT.

I.

With deep affection
And recollection
I often think of
Those Shandon bells,

Whose sounds so wild would,
 In the days of childhood,
 Fling round my cradle
 Their magic spells.
 On this I ponder
 Where'er I wander,
 And thus grow fonder,
 Sweet Cork, of thee;
 With thy bells of Shandon
 That sound so grand on
 The pleasant waters
 Of the river Lee.

II.

I've heard bells chiming
 Full many a clime in,
 Tolling sublime in
 Cathedral shrine,
 While at a glibe rate
 Brass tongues would vibrate
 But all their music
 Spoke naught like thine;
 For memory dwelling
 On each proud swelling
 Of the belfry knelling
 Its bold notes free,
 Made the bells of Shandon
 Sound far more grand on
 The pleasant waters
 Of the river Lee.

III.

I heard bells tolling
Old "Adrian's Mole" in,
Their thunder rolling
 From the Vatican,
And cymbals glorious
Swinging uproarious
In the gorgeous turrets
 Of the Notre Dame.
But thy sounds were sweeter
Than the dome o' Peter
Flings o'er the Tiber
 Pealing solemnly,
O! the bells of Shandon
Sound far more grand on
The pleasant waters
 Of the river Lee.

IV.

There's a bell in Moscow
White on tower and kiosk o!
In Saint Sophia
 The Turkman go to,
And loud in air
Calls men to prayer
From the tapering summit
 Of tall minarets.
Such empty phantom
I freely grant them;
But there is an anthem
 More dear to me,

'Tis the bells of Shandon
 That sound so grand on
 The pleasant waters
 Of the river Lee.

Exercise III.

FROM "LONDON ASSURANCE."

DION BOUCICAULT.

You never heard any music worth listening to except in Italy? No? Then you never heard a well-trained English pack full cry. Aye! There's harmony if you will. Give me the trumpet neigh! the spotted pack just catching scent. What a chorus in their yelp—the view-halloo blent with a peel of free and fearless mirth! That's our old English music—match it where you can. Your filly behaved gloriously, Max, gloriously. There were sixteen horses in the field, all metal to the bone; the start was a picture—away we went in a cloud, pell-mell, helter-skelter, the fools first as usual using themselves up. We soon passed them—first your Kitty, then my Blueskin, and Craven's colt last. Then came the tug, Kitty skimmed the walls, Blueskin flew o'er the fences, the colt neck and neck, and half a mile to run—at last the colt baulked a leap and went wild. Kitty and I had it all to ourselves—she was three lengths ahead as we breasted the last wall, six feet if an inch, and a ditch on the other side. Now for the first time I gave Blueskin his head. Ha! ha! away he flew

like a thunderbolt, over went the filly—I over the same spot, leaving Kitty in the ditch, walked the steeple, eight miles, in thirty minutes and scarcely turned a hair.

Exercise IV.

TO J*** H***, FOUR YEARS OLD.

LEIGH HUNT.

Ah, little, ranting Johnny !
For ever blithe and bonny,
And singing nony, nonny,
With hat just thrown upon ye ;
Or whistling like the thrushes
With voice in silver gushes ;
Or twisting random posies
With daisies, weeds, and roses ;
And strutting in and out so,
Or dancing all about so,
With cock-up nose so lightsome,
And sidelong eyes so brightsome,
And cheeks as ripe as apples,
And head as rough as Dapple's,
And arms as sunny shining
As if their veins had wine in ;
And mouth that smiles so truly,
Heaven seems to have made it newly,
It breaks into such sweetness,
With merry-lipped completeness ;—
Ah Jack, ah Gianni mio,

As blithe as Laughing Trio,
 —Sir Richard, too, you rattler,
 So christened from the Tattler,—
 My Bacchus in his glory,
 My little cor-di-fiori,
 My tricksome Puck, my Robin,
 Who in and out come bobbing,
 As full of feints and frolic as
 That fibbing rogue, Autolycus,
 And plays the graceless robber on
 Your grave-eyed brother Oberon,—
 Ah! Dick, ah Dolce-riso,
 How can you, can you be so?
 One cannot turn a minute,
 But mischief—there you're in it,
 A-getting at my books, John,
 With mighty bustling looks, John,
 Or poking at the roses,
 In midst of which your nose is;
 Or climbing on a table,
 No matter how unstable,
 And turning up your quaint eye
 And half-shut teeth, with "Mayn't I?"
 Or else you're off at play, John,
 Just as you'd be all day, John,
 With hat or not, as happens,
 And there you dance, and clap hands,
 Or on the grass go rolling,
 Or plucking flow'rs or bowling,
 And getting me expenses
 With losing balls o'er fences;

Or, as the constant trade is,
Are fondled by the ladies
With "What a young rogue this is!"
Reforming him with kisses;
Till suddenly you cry out,
As if you had an eye out,
So desperately tearful,
The sound is really fearful!
When, lo, directly after,
It bubbles into laughter.

Ah, rogue!—and do you know, John,
Why 'tis we love you so, John?
And how it is they let ye
Do what you like, and pet ye,
Though all who look upon ye
Exclaim, "Ah, Johnny, Johnny!"
It is because you please 'em
Still more, John, than you tease 'em;
Because, too, when not present,
The thought of you is pleasant;
Because, though such an elf, John,
They think that if yourself, John,
Had something to condemn too,
You'd be as kind to them too;
In short, because you're very
Good-tempered, Jack, and merry;
And are as quick at giving,
As easy at receiving;
And, in the midst of pleasure,
Are certain to find leisure

To think, my boy, of ours,
And bring us lumps of flowers.

But see, the sun shines brightly,
Come, put your hat on rightly,
And we'll among the bushes,
And hear your friends the thrushes;
And see what flow'rs the weather
Has rendered fit to gather;
And when we home must jog, you
Shall ride my back, you rogue, you,
Your hat adorned with fine leaves,
Horse-chestnuts, oak, and vine leaves,
And so, with green o'erhead, John,
Shall whistle home to bed, John.

V

EXERCISES FOR BREADTH

FROM THE POEMS OF SHAKESPEARE, MILTON,
JOHN DRYDEN, BYRON

Exercise I.

CYMBELINE.

SHAKESPEARE.

I.

FEAR no more the heat of the sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages ;
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone; and ta'en thy wages ;
Golden lads and girls all must
As chimney-sweepers come to dust.

II.

Fear no more the frown of the great,
Thou art past the tyrant's stroke :
Care no more to clothe and eat ;
To thee the reed is on the oak :
The sceptre, learning, physic, must
All follow this, and come to dust.

III.

Fear no more lightning flash
 Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone ;
 Fear not slander, censure rash,
 Thou has finished joy and moan.
 All lovers young, all lovers must
 Consign to thee, and come to dust.

IV.

No exorciser harm thee !
 Nor no witchcraft charm thee !
 Ghost unlaid forbear thee !
 Nothing ill come near thee !
 Quiet consummation have ;
 And renowned be thy grave.

Exercise II.

LYCIDAS.

MILTON.

Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more
 Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
 I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
 And with forced fingers rude,
 Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
 Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,
 Compels me to disturb your season due :
 For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
 Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer :
 Who would not sing for Lycidas ? He knew
 Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.

He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.
Begin then, Sisters of the sacred well,
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring,
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse,
So may some gentle Muse
With lucky words favour my destined urn,
And as he passes turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud.
For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock by fountain, shade, and rill.
Together both, ere the high lawns appear'd
Under the opening eyelids of the morn,
We drove a field, and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
Batt'ning our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star that rose, at evening, bright,
Toward heav'n's descent had sloped his west'ring
wheel.

Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,
Temper'd to the oaten flute,
Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven heel
From the glad sound would not be absent long,
And old Damœtas loved to hear our song.

But, O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never must return!
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods, and desert caves
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes mourn.

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The willows, and the hazel copses green,
Shall now no more be seen,
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or frost to flow'rs, that they their gay wardrobe
wear,

When first the white-thorn blows ;
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless
deep

Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas ?
For neither were ye playing on the steep,
Where your old Bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream :
Ay me ! I fondly dream !

Had ye been there, for what could that have done ?
What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The Muse herself for her enchanting son,
Whom universal nature did lament,
When by the rout that made the hideous roar,
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore ?

Alas ! what boots it with incessant care
To tend the homely slighted shepherd's trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse ?
Were it not better done as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair ?
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise

(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights, and live laborious days ;
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with the abhorred shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"
Phœbus replied, and touch'd my trembling ears ;
"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glist'ning foil
Set off to th' world, nor in broad rumour lies ;
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove ;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heav'n expect thy meed."'
O fountain Arethuse, and thou honour'd flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crown'd with vocal reeds
That strain I heard was of a higher mood :
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the herald of the sea
That came in Neptune's plea ;
He ask'd the waves, and ask'd the felon winds,
What hard mishap hath doom'd this gentle swain ?
And question'd every gust of rugged wings
That blows from off each beaked promontory :
They knew not of his story,
And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon stray'd,
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panope, with all her sisters play'd.
It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in th' eclipse, and rigg'd with curses dark,

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That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

Next Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that sanguine flow'r inscribed with woe.
Ah, who hath reft (quoeth he) my dearest pledge?
Last came, and last did go,
The pilot of the Galilean lake.

Two massy keys he bore of metals twain,
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain)
He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake,
How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,
Enow of such as for their bellies' sake
Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold!
Of other care they little reckoning make,
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest;
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learn'd aught else the least
That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!
What recks it them? What need they? They are
sped;

And when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But swoln with wind, and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread;
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours space, and nothing said;
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more.

Return, Alpheus, the dread voice is past,
That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells, and flow'rets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart-star sparsely looks:
Throw hither all your quaint enamell'd eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honied showers,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freak'd with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears:
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffodillies fill their cups with tears,
To strow the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.
For so to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise.
Ay me! Whilst thee the shores, and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurl'd,
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide,
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
Or whether thou to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great vision of the guarded mount
Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold:

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Look homeward Angel now, and melt with ruth.
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.

Weep no more, woful Shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor;
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky;
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Thro' the dear might of Him that walk'd the waves.
Where other groves, and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the genius of the shore
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals gray,
He touch'd the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay:
And now the sun had stretch'd out all the hills,
And now was dropp'd into the western bay;
At last he rose, and twitch'd his mantle blue:
To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

Exercise III.

ALEXANDER'S FEAST.

JOHN DRYDEN.

I.

'Twas at the royal feast for Persia won
By Philip's warlike son;
Aloft in awful state
The god-like hero sate
On his imperial throne;
His valiant peers were placed around,
Their brows with roses and with myrtles bound
(So should desert in arms be crowned);
The lovely Thais by his side
Sate like a blooming Eastern bride
In flower of youth and beauty's pride.
Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair!
Timotheus, placed on high
Amid the tuneful quire,
With flying fingers touched the lyre:
The trembling notes ascend the sky
And heavenly joys inspire.
The song began from Jove
Who left his blissful seats above,
Such is the power of mighty love!
A dragon's fiery form belied the god;
Sublime on radiant spires he rode

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When he to fair Olympia pressed,
And stamped an image of himself, a sovereign of the
world.

The listening crowd admire the lofty sound ;
A present deity ! they shout around ;
A present deity ! the vaulted roofs rebound.
With ravished ears
The monarch hears,
Assumes the god ;
Affects to nod
And seems to shake the spheres.

II.

The praise of Bacchus then the sweet musician sung,
Of Bacchus ever fair and ever young :
The jolly god in triumph comes,
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums.
Flushed with a purple grace
He shows his honest face :
Now give the hautboys breath ; he comes, comes
Bacchus, ever fair and young,
Drinking joys did first ordain ;
Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
Drinking is a soldier's pleasure :
Rich in treasure,
Sweet in pleasure,
Sweet is pleasure after pain.

III.

Soothed with the sound the king grew vain
Fought all his battles o'er again,

And thrice he routed all his foes, and thrice he slew
the slain !

The master saw the madness rise,
His glowing cheeks, his ardent eyes ;
And while he heaven and earth defied
Changed his hand, and checked his pride.
He chose a mournful Muse
Soft pity to infuse ;
He sung Darius great and good,
By too severe a fate
Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,
Fallen from his high estate,
And weltering in his blood ;
Deserted at his utmost need
By those his former bounty fed,
On this bare earth exposed he lies
With not a friend to close his eyes.
With downcast looks the joyless victor sate
Revolving in his altered soul
The various turns of chance below,
And now and then a sigh he stole,
And tears began to flow.

IV.

The mighty master smiled to see
That love was in the next degree ;
'Twas but a kindred-sound to move,
For pity melts the mind to love.
Softly sweet, in Lydian measures
Soon he soothed his soul to pleasures,

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War, he sang, is toil and trouble,
Honour but an empty bubble ;
Never ending, still beginning,
Fighting still, and still destroying ;
If the world be worth thy winning,
Think, O think it worth enjoying :
Lovely Thais sits beside thee,
Take the goods the gods provide thee.
The many rend the skies with loud applause ;
So love was crowned, but Music won the cause.
The prince, unable to conceal the pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
Sighed and looked, and sighed again :
At length, with love and wine at once oppressed
The vanquished victor sank upon her breast.

v.

Now strike the golden lyre again :
A louder yet, and yet a louder strain !
Break his bands of sleep asunder
And rouse him like a rattling peal of thunder.
Hark, hark ! the horrid sound
Has raised up his head :
As awaked from the dead,
And amazed he stares around.
Revenge, revenge, Timotheus cries.
See the Furies arise !
See the snakes that they rear,
How they hiss in their hair,

And the sparkles that flash from their eyes !
Behold a ghastly band,
Each a torch in his hand !
Those are Grecian ghosts, that in battle were slain
And unburied remain
Inglorious on the plain :
Give the vengeance due
To the valiant crew !
Behold how they toss their torches on high,
How they point to their Persian abodes
And glittering temples of their hostile gods.
The princes applaud with a furious joy :
And the King seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy.
Thais led the way
To light him to his prey,
And like another Helen fired another Troy !

VI.

Thus long ago,
'Ere heaving bellows learned to blow,
While organs yet were mute,
Timotheus, to his breathing flute
And sounding lyre, .
Could swell the soul to rage or kindle soft desire.
At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame ;
The sweet enthusiast from her sacred store
Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With nature's mother wit and arts unknown before.

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Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
Or both divide the crown ;
He raised a mortal to the skies ;
She drew an angel down.

Exercise IV.

DARKNESS.

BYRON.

I had a dream which was not all a dream.
The bright sun was extinguish'd, and the stars
Did wander darkling in the eternal space,
Rayless, and pathless, and the icy earth
Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air ;
Morn came and went—and came, and brought no day,
And men forgot their passions in the dread
Of this their desolation ; and all hearts
Were chill'd into a selfish prayer for light :
And they did live by watchfires—and the thrones,
The palaces of crowned kings—the huts,
The habitations of all things which dwell,
Were burnt for beacons ; cities were consumed,
And men were gather'd round their blazing homes
To look once more into each other's face ;
Happy were those who dwelt within the eye
Of the volcanoes, and their mountain-torch :
A fearful hope was all the world contain'd ;
Forests were set on fire—but hour by hour
They fell and faded—and the crackling trunks
Extinguish'd with a crash—and all was black.

The brows of men by the despairing light
Wore an unearthly aspect, as by fits
The flashes fell upon them ; some lay down
And hid their eyes and wept ; and some did rest
Their chins upon their clenched hands, and smiled
And others hurried to and fro, and fed
Their funeral piles with fuel and look'd up
With mad disquietude on the dull sky,
The pall of a past world ; and then again
With curses cast them down upon the dust,
And gnash'd their teeth and howl'd : the wild birds
shriek'd,

And, terrified, did flutter on the ground,
And flap their useless wings ; the wildest brutes
Came tame and tremulous ; and vipers crawl'd
And twined themselves among the multitude
Hissing, but stingless—they were slain for food
And War, which for a moment was no more,
Did glut himself again ;—a meal was bought
With blood, and each sate sullenly apart
Gorging himself in gloom : no love was left ;
All earth was but one thought—and that was death,
Immediate and inglorious : and the pang
Of famine fed upon all entrails—men
Died, and their bones were tombless as their flesh ;
The meagre by the meagre were devour'd,
Even dogs their masters, all save one,
And he was faithful to a corse, and kept
The birds and beasts and famish'd men at bay,
Till hunger clung them, or the dropping dead
Lured their lank jaws ; himself sought out no food,

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But with a piteous and perpetual moan,
And a quick desolate cry, licking the hand
Which answer'd not with a caress—he died.
The crowd was famish'd by degrees; but two
Of an enormous city did survive,
And they were enemies; they met beside
The dying embers of an altar-place
Where had been heap'd a mass of holy things
For an unholy usage; they raked up,
And shivering scraped with their cold skeleton hands
The feeble ashes, and their feeble breath
Blew for a little life, and made a flame
Which was a mockery; then they lifted up
Their eyes as it grew lighter and beheld
Each other's aspects—saw, and shriek'd, and died—
Even of their mutual hideousness they died,
Unknowing who he was upon whose brow
Famine had written Fiend. The world was void,
The populous and the powerful was a lump
Seasonless, herbless, treeless, manless, lifeless—
A lump of death—a chaos of hard clay.
The rivers, lakes, and ocean all stood still,
And nothing stirr'd within their silent depths;
Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea,
And their masts fell down piece-meal; as they dropp'd
They slept on the abyss without a surge—
The waves were dead; the tides were in their grave,
The Moon, their mistress, had expired before;
The winds were wither'd in the stagnant air,
And the clouds perish'd; Darkness had no need
Of aid from them—She was the Universe.

VI

EXERCISES FOR MODULATION, PHRASING, AND VARIETY

FROM WORDSWORTH, SHELLEY, BEN JONSON, THE
BOOK OF RUTH, SONG OF SOLOMON

By modulation I mean the rising and falling of the voice, by phrasing I mean colour. I do not mark any inflections, the student must determine this point through his own mentality; but he must pay attention to the punctuation marks. They are peculiarly used. Semi-colons count for a pause of two beats, commas one, colons three, and full-stops four. Ben Jonson uses full-stops frequently, Shelley very seldom. Wordsworth in a poem of fourteen lines has two colons and five semi-colons; but in the first seven lines these stops average a pause of one comma each (not counting the semi-colon in the middle of the fifth line, which still keeps the cadence of the verse equal), as there are three lines with no punctuation marks at all. The last six lines, taken on this method, go wild; it is almost impossible to count the stops and retain the sense of the poem. It is

frightfully difficult, but it can be done, and it is done by the rising and falling of the voice in perfect cadence and in giving every word in the full-stop line great importance, as for instance :

“ ALL BRIGHT and GLITTERING in the SMOKELESS AIR.”
and

“ AND ALL that MIGHTY HEART is LYING STILL.”

Exercise I.

SONNET COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER
BRIDGE.

WORDSWORTH.

Earth has not anything to show more fair ;
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty ;
This city now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning ; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky ;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour—valley, rock, or hill ;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !
The river glideth at his own sweet will :
Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep ;
And all that mighty heart is lying still !

Exercise II.

TO A SKYLARK.

SHELLEY.

Hail to thee, blithe spirit !

Bird thou never wert,

That from heaven, or near it,

Pourest thy full heart

In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher

From the earth thou springest

Like a cloud of fire ;

The blue deep thou wingest,

And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning

Of the sunken sun,

O'er which clouds are bright'ning,

Thou dost float and run ;

Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even

Melts around thy flight ;

Like a star of heaven,

In the broad day-light

Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight,

Keen as are the arrows

Of that silver sphere,

Whose intense lamp narrows

In the white dawn clear,

Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
 With thy voice is loud,
 As, when night is bare,
 From one lonely cloud
 The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is over-
 flowed.

What thou art we know not ;
What is most like thee ?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see,
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not.

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower :

Like a glow-worm golden
 In a dell of dew,
 Scattering unbeholden
 Its aërial hue [view :
 Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,

By warm winds deflowered,
 Till the scent it gives
 Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-winged
 thieves :

Sound of vernal showers
 On the twinkling grass,
 Rain-awakened flowers,
 All that ever was
 Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass :

Teach us, sprite or bird,
 What sweet thoughts are thine :
 I have never heard
 Praise of love or wine
 That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus Hymenæal,
 Or triumphal chaunt,
 Matched with thine would be all
 But an empty vaunt,
 A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
 Of thy happy strain ?
 What fields, or waves, or mountains ?
 What shapes of sky or plain ?
 What love of thine own kind ? what ignorance of pain ?

With thy clear keen joyance
 Languor cannot be :
 Shadow of annoyance
 Never came near thee :
 Thou lovest ; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep,
 Thou of death must deem
 Things more true and deep
 Than we mortals dream,
 Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream ?

We look before and after,
 And pine for what is not :
 Our sincerest laughter
 With some pain is fraught ;
 Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest
 thought.

Yet if we could scorn
 Hate, and pride, and fear ;
 If we were things born
 Not to shed a tear,
 I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
 Of delightful sound,
 Better than all treasures
 That in books are found,
 Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground !

Teach me half the gladness
 That thy brain must know,
 Such harmonious madness
 From my lips would flow,
 The world should listen then, as I am listening now.

*Exercise III.*SPEECH FROM BEN JONSON'S "THE
SILENT WOMAN."

Believe it, I told you right. Women ought to repair the losses time and years have made in their features, with dressings. And an intelligent woman, if she know by herself the least defect, will be most curious to hide it: and it becomes her. If she be short, let her sit much, lest, when she stand, she be thought to sit. If she have an ill foot, let her wear her gown the longer and her shoe the thinner. If a fat hand, and scald nails, let her carve less and act in gloves. If she have black and rugged teeth, let her offer the less at laughter, especially if she laugh wide and open. O, you shall have some women, when they laugh, you would think they brayed, ay, and others, that will stalk in their gait like an ostrich, and take huge strides. I cannot endure such a sight. I love measure in the feet, and number in the voice: they are gentlenesses that oftentimes draw no less than the face. To study these creatures, you must leave your chamber and come abroad, to court, to tiltings, public shows and feasts, to plays, and church sometimes; thither they come to show their new tires too, to see and be seen. In these places a man shall find whom to hold ever, and whom to play with. The variety arrests his judgement. A wench to please a man comes not down dropping from the ceiling, as he lies on his back droning a tobacco-pipe. He must go where she is. A man should not doubt to overcome any woman.

Think he can vanquish them, and he shall : for, though they deny, their Desire is to be tempted. Penelope herself cannot hold out long. Ostend, you saw, was taken at last. You must persevere, and hold to your purpose. They would solicit *us*, but that they are afraid. Howsoever, they wish in their hearts *we* would solicit them. Praise them, flatter them, you shall never want eloquence or trust. If you appear learned to an ignorant wench, or jocund to a sad, or witty to a foolish, why she presently begins to mistrust herself. You must approach them in their own height, their own line. If she love wit, give verses, though you borrow them of a friend, or buy them, to have them good. If valour, talk of your sword, and be frequent in the mention of quarrels, though you be staunch in fighting. If activity, be seen on your barbary often, or leaping over stools, for the credit of your back. If she loves good clothes or dressing, have your learned council about you every morning, your French tailor, barber, linener, &c. Let your powder, your glass, and your comb be your dearest acquaintance. Take more care for the ornament of your head, than the safety ; and wish the commonwealth rather troubled, than a hair about you. That will take her. Then, if she be covetous and craving, do you promise anything, and perform sparingly ; so shall you keep her in appetite still. Seem as you would give, but be like a barren field that yields little ; or unlucky dice to foolish and hoping gamesters. Let your gifts be light, and dainty, rather than precious. Let cunning be above cost. Give cherries at time of year, or apricots, and say they were sent you out of the country, though you bought them in Cheapside. Admire her tires :

like her in all fashions ; invent excellent dreams to flatter her, and riddles. Like what she likes ; praise whom she praises, and fail not to make her physician your pensioner, and her chief woman. Nor will it be out of your gain to make love to *her* too, so she follow, not usher her lady's pleasure. All blabbing is taken away, when she comes to be a part of the crime. Men should love wisely, and all women ; some one for the face, and let her please the eye ; another for the skin, and let her please the touch ; a third for the voice, and let her please the ear ; and where the objects mix, let the senses so too.

Exercise IV.

THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE BOOK OF RUTH.

Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Beth-lehem-judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.

And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Beth-lehem-judah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there.

And Elimelech Naomi's husband died ; and she was left, and her two sons.

And they took them wives of the women of Moab ; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth : and they dwelled there about ten years.

And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them ; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband.

Then she arose with her daughters in law, that she might return from the country of Moab : for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread.

Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with her ; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother's house : the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me.

The Lord grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them ; and they lifted up their voice, and wept.

And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.

And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters, why will ye go with me ?

Turn again, my daughters, go your way.

For it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the Lord is gone out against me.

And they lifted up their voice, and wept again : and Orpah kissed her mother in law ; but Ruth clave unto her.

And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods ; return thou after thy sister in law.

And Ruth said, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee : for whither thou

goest, I will go ; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge ; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.

Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried : the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.

When Naomi saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

So they two went until they came to Beth-lehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Beth-lehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi ?

And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara : for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.

I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty : why then call ye me Naomi, seeing that the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me ?

So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter in law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab ; and they came to Beth-lehem in the beginning of barley harvest.

Exercise V.

THE SECOND CHAPTER OF THE SONG OF SOLOMON.

I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.

As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.

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As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.

Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples : for I am sick of love.

I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please.

My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.

For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone ;

The flowers appear on the earth ; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land ;

The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice ; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.

Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines ; for our vines have tender grapes.

My beloved is mine, and I am his : he feedeth among the lilies.

Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or young hart upon the mountains of Bether.

PART III

MEMORISATIONS

(EXTRACTS FROM ESSAYS, NOVELS AND POEMS TO BE
COMMITTED TO MEMORY)

I

BARBARA S——.

BY CHARLES LAMB.

ON the noon of November 14, 1743 or 4, I forget which it was, just as the clock had struck one, Barbara S——, with her accustomed punctuality, ascended the long rambling staircase, with awkward interposed landing-places, which led to the office, or rather a sort of box with a desk in it, whereat sat the then treasurer of (what few of you may remember) the old Bath Theatre. All over the island it was the custom, and remains so I believe to this day, for the players to receive their weekly stipend on the Saturday. It was not much that Barbara had to claim.

The little maid had just entered her eleventh year ; but

her important station at the theatre, as it seemed to her, with the benefits which she felt to accrue from her pious application of her small earnings, had given an air of womanhood to her steps and to her behaviour. You would have taken her to have been at least five years older.

Till latterly she had merely been employed in choruses, or where children were wanted to fill up the scene. But the manager, observing a diligence and adroitness in her above her age, had for some few months past intrusted to her the performance of whole parts. You may guess the self-consequence of the promoted Barbara. She had already drawn tears in young Arthur; had rallied Richard with infantine petulance in the Duke of York; and in her turn had rebuked that petulance when she was Prince of Wales. She would have done the elder child in Morton's pathetic afterpiece to the life; but as yet the "Children in the Wood" was not.

Long after this little girl was grown an aged woman, I have seen some of these small parts, each making two or three pages at most, copied out in the rudest hand of the then prompter, who doubtless transcribed a little more carefully and fairly for the grown-up tragedy ladies of the establishment.

But such as they were, blotted and scrawled, as for a child's use, she kept them all; and in the zenith of her after reputation it was a delightful sight to behold them bound up in costliest morocco, each single—each small part making a book—with fine clasps, gilt-splashed, &c. She had conscientiously kept them as they had been delivered to her; not a blot had been effaced or tampered

with. They were precious to her for their affecting remembrancings. They were her principia, her rudiments ; the elementary atoms ; the little steps by which she pressed forward to perfection. "What," she would say, "could india-rubber, or a pumice-stone, have done for these darlings?"

I am in no hurry to begin my story—indeed, I have little or none to tell—so I will just mention an observation of hers connected with that interesting time.

Not long before she died I had been discoursing with her on the quantity of real present emotion which a great tragic performer experiences during acting. I ventured to think, that though in the first instance such players must have possessed the feelings which they so powerfully called up in others, yet by frequent repetition those feelings must become deadened in great measure, and the performer trust to the memory of past emotion, rather than express a present one. She indignantly repelled the notion that with a truly great tragedian the operation, by which such effects were produced upon an audience, could ever degrade itself into what was purely mechanical. With much delicacy, avoiding to instance in her self-experience, she told me, that so long ago as when she used to play the part of the Little Son to Mrs. Porter's Isabella (I think it was), when that impressive actress has been bending over her in some heartrending colloquy, she has felt real hot tears come trickling from her, which (to use her powerful expression) have perfectly scalded her back.

I am not quite so sure that it was Mrs. Porter ; but it was some great actress of that day. The name is in-

different ; but the fact of the scalding tears I most distinctly remember.

As I was about to say—at the desk of the then treasurer of the old Bath Theatre—not Diamond's—presented herself the little Barbara S——.

The parents of Barbara had been in reputable circumstances. The father had practised, I believe, as an apothecary in the town. But his practice was now reduced to nothing. They were, in fact, in the very teeth of starvation, when the manager, who knew and respected them in better days, took the little Barbara into his company.

At the period I commenced with, her slender earnings were the sole support of the family, including two younger sisters. I must throw a veil over some mortifying circumstances. Enough to say, that her Saturday's pittance was the only chance of a Sunday's (generally their only) meal of meat.

One thing I will only mention, that in some child's part, where in her theatrical character she was to sup off a roast fowl (O joy to Barbara !), some comic actor, who was for the night caterer for this dainty—in the misguided humour of his part, threw over the dish such a quantity of salt (O grief and pain of heart to Barbara !) that when he crammed a portion of it into her mouth, she was obliged splutteringly to reject it ; and what with shame of her ill-acted part, and pain of real appetite at missing such a dainty, her little heart sobbed almost to breaking, till a flood of tears, which the well-fed spectators were totally unable to comprehend, mercifully relieved her.

This was the little starved, meritorious maid, who

stood before old Ravenscroft, the treasurer, for her Saturday's payment.

Ravenscroft was a man, I have heard many old theatrical people besides herself say, of all men least calculated for a treasurer. He had no head for accounts, paid away at random, kept scarce any books, and summing up at the week's end, if he found himself a pound or so deficient. blest himself that it was no worse.

Now Barbara's weekly stipend was a bare half-guinea. By mistake he popped into her hand—a whole one.

Barbara tripped away.

She was entirely unconscious at first of the mistake: God knows, Ravenscroft would never have discovered it.

But when she had got down to the first of those uncouth landing-places, she became sensible of an unusual weight of metal pressing in her little hand.

Now mark the dilemma.

She was by nature a good child. From her parents and those about her she had imbibed no contrary influence. But then they had taught her nothing. Poor men's smoky cabins are not always porticoes of moral philosophy. This little maid had no instinct to evil, but then she might be said to have no fixed principle. She had heard honesty commended, but never dreamed of its application to herself. She thought of it as something which concerned grown-up people, men and women. She had never known temptation, or thought of preparing resistance against it.

Her first impulse was to go back to the old treasurer, and explain to him his blunder. He was already so confused with age, besides a natural want of punctuality, that

she would have had some difficulty in making him understand it. She saw that in an instant. And then it was such a bit of money! and then the image of a larger allowance of butcher's meat on their table the next day came across her, till her little eyes glistened and her mouth moistened. But then Mr. Ravenscroft had always been so good-natured, had stood her friend behind the scenes, and even recommended her promotion to some of her little parts. But again the old man was reputed to be worth a world of money. He was supposed to have fifty pounds a year clear of the theatre. And then came staring upon her the figures of her little stockingless and shoeless sisters. And when she looked at her own neat white cotton stockings, which her situation at the theatre had made it indispensable for her mother to provide for her, with hard straining and pinching from the family stock, and thought how glad she should be to cover their poor feet with the same—and how then they could accompany her to rehearsals, which they had hitherto been precluded from doing, by reason of their unfashionable attire,—in these thoughts she reached the second landing-place—the second, I mean, from the top—for there was still another left to traverse.

Now virtue support Barbara!

And that never-failing friend did step in—for at that moment a strength not her own, I have heard her say, was revealed to her—a reason above reasoning—and without her own agency as it seemed (for she never felt her feet to move), she felt herself transported back to the individual desk she had just quitted, and her hand in the hand of old Ravenscroft, who in silence took back

the refunded treasure, and who had been sitting (good man) insensible to the lapse of minutes, which to her were anxious ages, and from that moment a deep peace fell upon her heart, and she knew the quality of honesty.

A year or two's unrepining application to her profession brightened up the feet and the prospects of her little sisters, set the whole family upon their legs again, and released her from the difficulty of discussing moral dogmas upon a landing-place.

I have heard her say that it was a surprise, not much short of mortification to her, to see the coolness with which the old man pocketed the difference, which had caused her such mortal throes.

This anecdote of herself I had in the year 1800, from the mouth of the late Mrs. Crawford, then sixty-seven years of age (she died soon after) ; and to her struggles upon this childish occasion I have sometimes ventured to think her indebted for that power of rending the heart in the representation of conflicting emotions, for which in after years she was considered as little inferior (if at all so in the part of Lady Randolph) even to Mrs. Siddons.

II

PUNCHINELLO

BY HANS ANDERSEN

"I KNOW a Punchinello," said the moon. "The public scream with delight the moment they see him, for every one of his movements are so ridiculous the whole house roars with delight the moment he comes on to the stage. It is at him they laugh, not his art. Even when he was quite a little boy he was an object of mirth and derision to the other boys—he was always called Punchinello, for Nature had made him one. She had given him a hump on his back and another on his chest. This indeed was a laughable spectacle.

"But the inner man, the Soul, which they did not see, ah! *that* was magnificent. No one had a greater or nobler mind than this poor little Punchinello.

"The theatre was his Ideal World. If he had been slender and straight and well made he would have been the greatest tragedian on any stage. The great and the heroic filled his soul, but because of his two miserable humps he had to be a Punchinello. Even his pain and melancholy increased the comic dryness of his

sharply cut features, and provoked to delirium the laughter of the multitudes who applauded their favourite.

"The pretty Columbine was indeed kind and friendly. When Punchinello was in low spirits she was the only one who could make him smile or even laugh outright. At first she would be melancholy too in sweet sympathy, then gay, and at last full of fun.

"‘I know what is the matter with you,’ she would say, standing on the tip of one toe, ‘you are in love.’

"‘I in love?’ he would exclaim with a roar of laughter.

"‘Yes, you are in love,’ she would repeat; ‘*and* you are in love with me,’ and she would pirouette in a charming manner till he laughed and capered in the air at such a thought.

"‘We should be a nice pair. How the public would applaud us!’

"You see such things can be said when they are impossible. And yet she had spoken the truth. He loved her, he worshipped her, and no one among the troupe of actors ever guessed it, and of course *she* married the handsome Harlequin.

"At her wedding he was the merriest person there, but at night he wept bitter tears. I saw him through the lattice window sitting on his little bed. Ah! had the public seen him they would have indeed applauded him.

"Quite lately Columbine died, and on the day of her funeral Harlequin was, of course, not expected to appear. He was a disconsolate widower, and the manager was obliged to produce something more than usually lively

so that the public should not miss the pretty Columbine. Therefore Punchinello had to be more comic than ever.

“ ‘ Make them laugh,’ said the manager to him ; ‘ make them laugh heartily, for they are very sad,’ and he capered and bounded and danced, with despair eating into his very heart, and was more applauded than ever, and the public quite forgot the pretty Columbine. ‘ Bravo ! Bravissimo ! ’ they shouted ; he was recalled again and again in front of the curtain.

“ But after the performance he slunk away out of the town, just as he was in his Punchinello dress, and went to the lonely churchyard. The wreaths were already withering on Columbine’s grave. He sat down on it. A great artist would have made a great picture of him as he sat there with his chin in his hand, his elbow resting on his little contorted legs, his eyes streaming with tears, looking up at me. He was like a monument, a Punchinello on a grave—characteristic, and oh ! so comic. If the public had seen their favourite how they would have shouted ‘ Bravo ! Bravissimo ! Punchinello ! ’ ”

III

EXTRACT FROM "SHIPS THAT PASS IN THE NIGHT"

BY BEATRICE HARRADEN

(By kind permission of the Author)

A BETROTHAL.

HE had loved her so patiently, and now he felt that he must have his answer. It was only fair to her, and to himself too, that he should know exactly where he stood in her affections. She had certainly given him little signs here and there, which had made him believe that she was not indifferent to his admiration. Little signs were all very well for a short time; but meanwhile the season was drawing to an end; she had told him that she was going back to her work at home. And then perhaps he might lose her altogether. It would not be safe for him to delay a single day longer. So the little postman armed himself with courage.

Warli's brain was muddled that day. He who prided himself upon knowing the names of all the guests in Petershof, made the most absurd mistakes about people

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and letters too ; and received in acknowledgment of his stupidity a series of scoldings which would have unnerved a stronger person than the little hunchback postman. In fact, he ceased to care how he gave out the letters : all the envelopes seemed to have the same name on them : Marie Truog. Every word he tried to decipher turned to that ; so finally he tried no more, leaving the destination of the letters to be decided by the impulse of the moment. At last he arrived at that quarter of the Kurhaus where Marie held sway.

He heard her singing in her pantry. Suddenly she was summoned downstairs by an impatient bellringer, and on her return found Warli waiting in the passage. "What a goose you are," she cried, throwing a letter at him ; "you have left the wrong letter at No. 82." Then some one else rang, and Marie hurried off again. She came back with another letter in her hand, and found Warli sitting in her pantry. "The wrong letter left at No. 54," she said, "and Madame in a horrid temper in consequence. What a nuisance you are to-day, Warli ! Can't you read ? Here, give the remaining letters to me. I'll sort them."

Warli took off his little round hat, and wiped his forehead.

"I can't read to-day, Marie," he said ; "something has gone wrong with me. Every name I look at turns to Marie Truog. I ought to have brought every one of the letters to you. But I knew they could not all be for you, though you have so many admirers. For they would not be likely to write at the same time, to catch the same post."

"It would be very dull if they did," said Marie, who was polishing some water-bottles with more diligence than was usual or even necessary. "But I am the one who loves you, Mariechen," the little postman said. "I have always loved you, ever since I can remember. I am not much to look at Mariechen: the binding of the book is not beautiful, but the book itself is not a bad book." Marie went on polishing the water-bottles. Then she held them up to the light to admire their unwonted cleanness. "I don't plead for myself," continued Warli. "If you don't love me then that is the end of the matter. But if you do love me, Mariechen, and will marry me, you won't be unhappy. Now I have said all." Marie put down the water-bottles, and turned to Warli. "You have been a long time in telling me," she said pouting. "Why didn't you tell me three months ago? It's too late now." "Oh, Mariechen!" said the little postman, seizing her hand and covering it with kisses; "you love some one else—you are already betrothed? And now it is too late, and you love some one else." "I never said I loved some one else," Marie replied; "I only said it was too late. Why, it must be nearly five o'clock, and my lamps are not yet ready. I haven't a moment to spare. Dear me, and there is no oil in the can; no, not one little drop." "The devil take the oil," exclaimed Warli, snatching the can out of her hands. "What do I want to know about the oil in the can? I want to know about the love in your heart. Oh, Mariechen, don't keep me waiting like this. Just tell me if you love me and make me the happiest man in all Switzerland." "Must I tell the truth," she said, in a

most melancholy tone of voice; "the truth and nothing else? Well, Warli, if you must know . . . how I grieve to hurt you. . . ." Warli's heart sank, the tears came into his eyes. "But since it must be the truth, and nothing else," continued the torturer, ". . . well, Fritz, . . . I love you."

A few minutes afterwards the Disagreeable Man, having failed to attract any notice by ringing, descended to Marie's pantry to fetch his lamp. He discovered Warli embracing his betrothed. "I am sorry to intrude," he said grimly, and he retreated at once. But directly afterwards he came back. "The matron has just come upstairs," he said. And then he hurried away.

IV

EXTRACT FROM THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE "CITY OF BEAUTIFUL NONSENSE"

BY E. TEMPLE THURSTON

A PRELUDE ON THE EVE OF ST. JOSEPH'S DAY.

OF course, the eighteenth of March—but it is out of the question to say upon which day of the week it fell.

It was half-past seven in the evening. At half-past seven it is dark, the lamps are lighted, the houses huddle together in groups. They have secrets to tell as soon as it is dark. Ah! If you knew the secret that houses are telling when the shadows draw them so close together! But you never will know. They close their eyes and they whisper.

Around the fields of Lincoln's Inn it was as still as the grave. The footsteps of a lawyer's clerk hurrying late away from chambers vibrated through the intense quiet. You heard each step to the very last. So long as you could see him, you heard them plainly; then he vanished behind the curtain of shadows, the sounds became muffled, and at last the silence crept back into the Fields—crept all around you, half eager, half

reluctant, like sleepy children drawn from their beds to hear the end of a fairy story.

There was a fairy story to be told too.

It began that night of the eighteenth of March—the Eve of St. Joseph's day.

I don't know what it is about St. Joseph, but of all those saints who crowd their hallowed names upon the calendar—and good Heavens! how many there are!—he seems most worthy of canonisation.

And amongst Roman Catholics who, when it comes to matters of faith, are like children at a fair, the spirit of condolence seems to have crept its way into their attitude towards this simple-minded man.

"Poor St. Joseph," they say, "I always get what I want from him. I've never known him to fail."

Or—"Poor St. Joseph—he's not a bit of good to me, I always pray to the Blessed Virgin for everything I want."

Could anything be more childlike, more ingenuous, more like a game in a nursery—the only place in the world where things are really believed?

Every saint possesses his own separate quality, efficacious in its own separate way. St. Roch holds the magic philtre of health; you pray to St. Anthony to recover all those things that were lost. For safety at sea St. Gerald is unsurpassed; but St. Joseph—poor St. Joseph—from him flow all those good things which money can buy—the children's toys, the woman's pin-money, and the luxuries which are the necessities of the man.

Think, if you can, if you can conjure before your

mind's eye, of all the things that must happen on the Eve of the feast day of St. Joseph. How many thousands of knees are bent, how many thousand jaded bodies and hungry souls whisper the name of "poor St. Joseph"! The prayers for that glitter of gold, that shine of silver and that jangling of copper must be too numerous to count. What a busy day it must be where these prayers are heard! What hopes must be born that night and what responsibilities lightened! Try and count the candles that are lighted before the shrine of St. Joseph! It is impossible.

It all resolves itself into a simple mathematical calculation. Tell me how many poor there are, and I will tell you how many candles are burnt, how many prayers are prayed, and how many hopes are born on the Eve of St. Joseph's day.

And how many poor are there in the world?

The bell was tolling for eight o'clock Benediction at the Sardinia Street Chapel on that evening of the eighteenth of March—Sardinia Street Chapel which stands so tremulously in the shadows of Lincoln's Inn Fields—tremulously, because any day the decision of the council of a few men may raze it ruthlessly to the ground.

Amongst all the figures kneeling there in the dim candle light, their shoulders hunched, their heads sinking deeply in their hands, there was not one but on whose lips the name of "poor St. Joseph" lingered in earnest or piteous appeal.

These were the poor, and who and what were they?

There was a stockbroker who paid a rent of some three hundred pounds a year for his offices in the City, a rent of one hundred and fifty for his chambers in Temple Gardens, and whose house in the country was kept in all the splendour of wealth. Behind him—he sat in a pew by himself—was a lady wearing a heavy fur coat. She was young. Twenty-three at the utmost. There was nothing to tell from her, but her bent head, that the need of money could ever enter into her consideration. She also was in a pew by herself. Behind her, sat three servant girls. On the other side of the aisle, parallel with the lady in the fur coat, there was a young man—a writer—a journalist—a driver of the pen, whose greatest source of poverty was his ambition.

Kneeling behind him at various distances there were a clerk, a bank manager, a charwoman, and behind all these at the end of the chapel, devout, intent, and as earnest as the rest, were four Italian organ-grinders.

These are the poor of the earth. They are not a class. They are every class. Poverty is not a condition of some; it is a condition of all. And so, that simple arithmetical problem must remain unsolved; for it is impossible to tell the poor of this world, and therefore just so impossible it is to count the candles that are burnt, the prayers that are prayed, or the hopes that are born on the Eve of St. Joseph's day.

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V

EXCERPT FROM "PLACES I HAVE NEVER SEEN (ENGLAND)"

BY DION CLAYTON CALTHROP

(By kind permission of the "London Magazine")

FROM all one can hear from English people there is no place like England.

The English are a delightful people without any false pride; they state what they know to be a fact, and they abide by it, and as they say that they are the first nation in the world and possess the finest country, one necessarily believes them.

England is divided into counties of different colours. I have the authority of the map for that.

But people must not be disappointed if they don't at once perceive the prevailing colour of the county they chance to set foot in. I am told that members of the English Parliament are compelled to wear waistcoats of the colours of their counties, so that they may easily be identified. I am told also that when the Irish party rises to speak all together the flash of green from their waistcoats greatly enlivens the monotony of making laws.

There is, besides, a party of splendid men recruited

from the labouring classes, who make what are called agitators. These men wear red ties and corduroy trousers. The combined effect of all this colour in the House of Commons is said to make a pretty scene.

But then the English are a very artistic people. They take a deep interest in politics; even some of the members appear quite interested though they have so much of them. Many members adopt other means than the coloured waistcoats to become known to the people. For example, Mr. Mason writes novels; Mr. Hilaire Belloc walks to Rome and sings in the street—I do not mean professionally, but from pure joy of living; Mr. Winston Churchill invents neat little phrases; Lord Rosebery lays foundation-stones; Mr. Balfour is said to be learning golf.

The English are fond of antiquity, and cling to the oddest bits of language. Thus when a brand new tea-shop is built it is furnished after the manner of a mediæval kitchen in fumed oak, into which even worm-holes have been drilled to give it an ancient appearance, and they call the shop "Ye Jollie Olden Tea Hostel." This sign makes up in a degree for the lack of proper accommodation, and for the quality of the tea. It is also very pleasant to be reminded of the good old days.

Like all nations, the English have an ideal standard. It consists of a desire to keep unmoved in circumstances where great emotion is usually displayed. To light a cigar before rescuing a friend from drowning, to pass by a creditor without a sign of recognition, to stand before a magnificent picture and say "Really!" with a drawl: these are the high places of the English ideal. I have

heard of an Englishman who on meeting a lady he had not seen for twenty years told her she did not look a day older.

This kind of act endears them to all peoples and all nations.

If one word is more dear to the heart of an Englishman than another it is the word "home." If one sentence is more precious than another it is, "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." The home is the standard of perfection by which all things are judged—art, literature, the drama, &c.

The Englishman does not ask his book-seller if a book be good literature; he asks if it is fit for the home. He does not ask for much in painting, he wishes it to meet the requirements of the home. A puppy playing with a soda-water bottle, a baby kissing a doll, a landscape containing snow, a cottage, a few domestic animals, and a tree or too: these satisfy his simple taste. Not but what he likes bright colours and a neat finish to his work. He looks upon old masters as an investment, and modern genius as a nuisance, and so is able to lead a quiet, undisturbed life.

A play at a theatre which contains a child saying pretty things to a lady, a song about a mother-in-law or a lodger, a heroine who wears white, and a villain who wears dress-clothes, tempts him from his fireside. But anything calculated to remind him that life is a serious, complex problem he very wisely dislikes. He is a very simple, pleasant person.

England is a country of hedges.

There is a hedge round everything. It gives the

country the appearance of being a garden, and the manners and customs the air of being preserved. England is divided into hundreds of small communities, each independent of the other, and ignorant of the other also. Every class is divided by a quickset hedge from the next.

Country town life is different from the town life in London. There are three forms of entertainment in the country which suffice for the needs of the inhabitants—the garden party, the parish tea, and the public-house for the evening.

At each we meet a universal drink. At the garden party there is a concoction called claret cup, without which no English open-air function is complete; it is a sour drink, composed of cheap claret, lemon juice, sugar, and water. At the second we have tea—about the favourite of English beverages; it is made from an Indian herb, steamed till the tannin has come from it, and is taken hot with milk and sugar. No English home is a home unless tea is provided at least three times a day. As the third great English institution we have beer. No one can exactly say what beer is composed of, but it is supposed to be good for the skin, and the interesting complexion of London cabdrivers is said to arise from it.

I am told that the English are a nation of sportsmen, and it would appear from their publications to be true; that they spend a great deal of their money on sport is evident from the betting pages in every paper.

There is a class of men, who are paid, like the old Roman gladiators, to sport for the great public, and the names of those who are successful are on the lips of the nation.

Many an Englishman who has never seen a racehorse has lost heavily on the turf. Many an Englishman who has never played cricket or football in his life has yelled himself hoarse over matches he has paid to have played before him.

I have heard of a gentleman who shoots tame pheasants, which he has himself brought up by hand, so accurately that he is able to supply a large London poulterer with pheasants at 4s. a brace.

London is the capital of England, and is a large place ; its largeness is indeed surprising to strangers. Its fogs, houses in rows, dingy streets, and lack of lighting by night make it a very romantic, dreamy place in which to live. The Englishman has a passion for figures (mathematical), and I propose to give a few, very simple statistics of London which will serve to give some idea of its gigantic size.

If all the novels written in London in one year were to be written by one novelist, it would take him four hundred years, eight days and thirty-two seconds, calculating every novel as four hundred and twenty pages, written at the rate of half an hour a page.

If all the bones of all the Irish stews eaten in one day in London were piled up together it would be possible to build a mountain as high as Mount Perdue (France).

There are four times more hot chestnut barrowmen and ice vendors in London than there are in Milan, Parnamboli, Villa Bellisite, all told.

These astonishing facts are but a few in the records of this truly remarkable place.

If one were asked what makes England different from

all other countries, one would find it difficult at first to answer. The Englishman himself is a pattern of breeding; his clean white shirt, red face, plain gold ring, check knickerbockers, square-toed boots, and general air of owning a little land in the country make him different from the men of other nations. The general aspect of the country is well-fed, prosperous, rich in green trees, in thick hedges, in parks and pleasure gardens. There is an air of contentment in the very sight of an English village, with its little old church, its Wesleyan chapel, Friends' Meeting house, its Zion chapel, its Nonconformist church, its Catholic mission. There is a cheery appearance in the places of refreshment at every good corner. We hear of the "Dog and Drop," the "King's Arms," the "White Horse," the "George," the "Black Swan," all helping mellow convivial tastes of the simple village. Here and there the Government shows with its colour note of red, in the pillar-box, the mail-van, or the recruiting sergeant. The country has an essentially rustic look, a turn for the picturesque. England is an agricultural country—yet they grow more corn in France, make more butter in Denmark, rear more chickens in Spain.

England is the country of sailors—mostly foreign.

England is the country of poets—mostly dead.

England is the country in which most of the Anarchists meet to talk of destruction and death to foreign monarchs.

England is the home of the Suffragette.

VI

"THE BORDER GREYS"

BY F. B.

(By kind permission of the Author)

1

COME, Ellen, Annie, little Susan come,
Leave everything, leave all your work at home—
Leave all nor think of anything to-day
Save but of those bent on their homeward way,
The soldier lads returning from the fight.
Oh watch for them—watch for the happy sight
For peace has come, the cruel war is past,
The Border Greys are coming home at last.

2

But when they come, I heard some people say
They will not tarry here—they're on their way
To reach the little town beyond the hill
To lay their weapons down—and then they will
Come back to us—they will at last be here
The lads we've longed for, prayed for, for a year.

3

There's Jimmy Stuart and Colin Bell and Tom
And Bobbie Burns, for us to welcome home,
And sturdy Neil, of Border wrestlers best—
And then the dearer name than all the rest,
The handsomest and bravest lad is he,
It's Jamie, Jamie coming back to me.

4

Hark! listen! what is that? I hear the sound
Of footsteps ringing on the beaten ground;
See! see! a shepherd running from the right—
Ho, boy, what is it? are the lads in sight?
Yes, yes, he says, they're coming, coming now,
It's true, it's true! see there across the brow
Of yonder hill! they come, they're coming fast,
The Border Greys returning home at last!

5

Yes, yes, they come! the foremost ones draw near,
Strain all your eyes to see, your ears to hear—
But oh, these waiting minutes all seem hours!
How well they march, those bonnie lads of ours!
March with the stalwart, steady measured tramp
That they have learnt in battlefield and camp.
And now they nearer come—and nearer—nearer—
Oh joy! at last we see their faces clearer.

6

And now the first are passing here—they come!
Oh welcome Border Greys! Oh, welcome home!
Ah see there, Ellen, there is Bobbie Burns,
And there is Neil—and Colin too returns.
See, there is Tom—look, Annie, he is there,
Wave high your kerchief, wave it in the air!

7

And next will be my turn, when I shall see
Jamie, my Jamie, coming back to me. . . .
My eyes are weary, I have looked so long.
Where is he? which is he among the throng?
Look there is one that makes a sign—'tis he!
No, no, 'tis Hugh—look, Maggie, yonder see,
And let him see you wave your hand with joy
As I will when my lover passes by.

8

Why does he march so late, among the last?
Is it to make my heart beat wild and fast
With hope, and love and eagerness? I strain—
I look—scarce half a score of files remain—
Now I shall see him—now he'll surely come!
My poor heart's caught the echo of the drum
That's heard no more, so far ahead 'tis past—
Now I shall surely see my love at last.

9

Still, still, they come—they pass me one by one,
I scarce have time to look, the ranks move on,
The cruel ranks of faces all unknown
That seem to mock me, as I stand alone.
Where is he? Ellen, Annie, stand near me
And strain your eyes as far as you can see,
For mine are dim with tears, I cannot tell
Which of them is the face I love so well.

10

You say you cannot see him?—what? ah no—
He marches with the very last I know,
He'll come the last, the bravest and the best—
Can you not see him now among the rest?
Oh stop them as they pass—oh ask them where
They left him? why he is not there?
And why they march without him? can it be . . .
Ah no!—my God, my God! not that—oh see—

See the last line—see—see—the very last. . . .
Alas, alas, the Border Greys had passed.

PART IV

DUOLOGUES FROM NOVELS AND PLAYS

I

SCENE FROM "THE PROVOKED HUSBAND"

BY VANBRUGH AND COLLEY CIBBER

ACT III., SCENE 1.

LADY T. Oh, my dear Lady Grace! how could you leave me so unmercifully alone, all this while?

LADY G. I thought my lord had been with you.

LADY T. Why, yes; and, therefore, I wanted your relief; for he has been in such a fluster here——

LADY G. Bless me! for what?

LADY T. Only our usual breakfast? we have each of us had our dish of matrimonial comfort this morning——We have been charming company!

LADY G. I am mighty glad of it! sure, it must be a vast happiness, when a man and wife can give themselves the same turn of conversation!

LADY T. Oh, the prettiest thing in the world!

LADY G. Now I should be afraid, that, where two

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people are every day together so, they must often be in want of something to talk upon.

LADY T. Oh, my dear, you are the most mistaken in the world! married people have things to talk of, child, that never enter into the imagination of others.—Why, here's my lord and I, now, we have not been married above two short years, you know, and we have already eight or ten things, constantly in bank, that, whenever we want company, we can take up any one of them, for two hours together, and the subject never the flatter; nay, if we have occasion for it, it will be as fresh next day too, as it was the first hour it entertained us.

LADY G. Certainly, that must be vastly pretty

LADY T. Oh, there's no life like it! Why, t'other day, for example, when you dined abroad, my lord and I, after a pretty cheerful *tête à tête* meal, sat us down by the fire side, in an easy, indolent, pick tooth way, for about a quarter of an hour, as if we had not thought of any other's being in the room——At last, stretching himself, and yawning—My dear—says he——aw——you came home very late last night——'Twas but just turned of two, says I——I was in bed——aw——by eleven, says he——So you are every night, says I——Well, says he, I am amazed you can sit up so late——How can you be amazed, says I, at a thing that happens so often?—Upon which, we entered into a conversation—and though this is a point has entertained us above fifty times already, we always find so many pretty new things to say upon it, that, I believe in my soul it will last as long as we live.

LADY G. But pray, in such sort of family dialogues, (though extremely well for passing the time) don't there, now and then, enter some little witty sort of bitterness?

LADY T. Oh, yes! which does not do amiss at all—A smart repartee, with a zest of recrimination at the head of it, makes the prettiest sherbet! Ay, ay, if we did not mix a little of the acid with it, a matrimonial society would be so luscious, that nothing but an old liquorish prude would be able to bear it.

LADY G. Well, certainly, you have the most elegant taste——

LADY T. Though, to tell you the truth, my dear, I rather think we squeezed a little too much lemon into it, this bout; for, it grew so sour at last, that—I think—I almost told him he was a fool—and he, again—talked something oddly of—turning me out of doors.

LADY G. Oh, have a care of that!

LADY T. Nay, if he should, I may thank my own wise father for it.—But, to be serious, my dear; what would you really have a woman do, in my case?

LADY G. Why—if I had a sober husband, as you have, I would make myself the happiest wife in the world, by being as sober as he.

LADY T. Oh, you wicked thing! how can you tease one at this rate, when you know he is so very sober, that, except giving me money, there is not one thing in the world he can do to please me. And I, at the same time, partly by nature, and partly, perhaps, by keeping the best company, do, with my soul, love almost every thing he hates. I dote upon assemblies—my heart bounds at a ball—and, at an opera—I expire.—Then I

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love play, to distraction!—cards enchant me—and dice—put me out of my little wits—Dear, dear hazard!—Oh, what a flow of spirits it gives one!—Do you never play at hazard, child?

LADY G. Oh, never! I don't think it sits well upon women—there's something so masculine, so much the air of a rake in it! You see how it makes the men swear and curse! and when a woman is thrown into the same passion—why——

LADY T. That's very true; one is a little put to it, sometimes, not to make use of the same words to express it.

LADY G. Well; and, upon ill luck, pray what words are you really forced to make use of?

LADY T. Why, upon a very hard case, indeed, when a sad wrong word is rising, just to one's tongue's end, I give a great gulp—and swallow it.

LADY G. Well; and is not that enough to make you forswear play, as long as you live?

LADY T. Oh, yes—I have forsworn it.

LADY G. Seriously?

LADY T. Solemnly!—a thousand times; but then one is constantly forsworn.

LADY G. And how can you answer that?

LADY T. My dear, what we say, when we are losers, we look upon, to be no more binding, than a lover's oath, or a great man's promise. But I beg pardon, child, I should not lead you so far into the world; you are a prude, and design to live soberly.

LADY G. Why, I confess, my nature and my education do, in a good degree, incline me that way.

LADY T. Well, how a woman of spirit (for you don't want that, child) can dream of living soberly, is, to me, inconceivable ! for you will marry, I suppose ?

LADY G. I can't tell but I may.

LADY T. And won't you live in town ?

LADY G. Half the year, I should like it very well.

LADY T. My stars ! and you would really live in London half the year, to be sober in it ?

LADY G. Why not ?

LADY T. Why, can't you as well go and be sober in the country ?

LADY G. So I would—t'other half year.

LADY T. And pray, what comfortable scheme of life would you form, now, for your summer and winter sober entertainments ?

LADY G. A scheme that, I think, might very well content us.

LADY T. Oh, of all things, let's hear it,

LADY G. Why, in summer, I could pass my leisure hours in reading, walking by a canal, or sitting at the end of it, under a great tree ; in dressing, dining, chatting with an agreeable friend ; perhaps, hearing a little music, taking a dish of tea, or a game of cards, soberly ; managing my family, looking into its accounts, playing with my children, if I had any, or in a thousand other innocent amusements—soberly ; and, possibly, by these means, I might induce my husband to be as sober as myself.

LADY T. Well, my dear, thou art an astonishing creature ! For, sure, such primitive, antediluvian notions of life have not been in any head these thousand

years—Under a great tree ! Oh, my soul !—But I beg we may have the sober town scheme too—for I am charmed with the country one !

LADY G. You shall ; and I'll try to stick to my sobriety there too.

LADY T. Well, though I'm sure it will give me the vapours, I must hear it, however.

LADY G. Why, then, for fear of your fainting, madam, I will first so far come into the fashion, that I would never be dressed out of it—but still, it should be soberly ; for, I can't think it any disgrace to a woman of my private fortune, not to wear her lace as fine, as the wedding-suit of a first duchess. Though, there is one extravagance I would venture to come up to.

LADY T. Ay, now for it !

LADY G. I would every day be as neat as a bride.

LADY T. Why, the men say, that's a great step to be made one—Well, now you are dressed, pray let's see to what purpose ?

LADY G. I would visit—that is, my real friends ; but as little for form as possible.—I would go to court ; sometimes, to an assembly, nay, play at quadrille—soberly : I would see all the good plays ; and, because 'tis the fashion, now and then, an opera—but I would not expire there, for fear I should never go again : and, lastly, I can't say, but for curiosity, if I liked my company, I might be drawn in once to a masquerade ; and this, I think, is as far as any woman can go—soberly.

LADY T. Well, if it had not been for this last piece of sobriety, I was just going to call for some surfeit water.

LADY G. Why, don't you think, with the farther aid of breakfasting, dining, and taking the air, supping, sleeping, not to say a word of devotion, the four-and-twenty hours might roll over in a tolerable manner?

LADY T. Tolerable? deplorable! Why, child, all you propose is but to endure life; now, I want to enjoy it. But, my dear, you will excuse me; you know, my time is so precious——

LADY G. That I beg I may not hinder your least enjoyment of it.

LADY T. You will call on me at Lady Revel's?

LADY G. Certainly.

LADY T. But I am so afraid it will break into your scheme, my dear!

LADY G. When it does, I will—soberly break from you.

LADY T. Why, then, till we meet again, dear sister, I wish you all tolerable happiness.

II

SCENE TAKEN FROM "THE INNOCENTS AT HOME"

BY MARK TWAIN

SCENE: *The parlour of a young minister from the Eastern States settled in Nevada. He is discovered sitting at his desk. To him enter SCOTTY BRIGGS, a miner.*

SCOTTY BRIGGS. Are you the duck that runs the gospel-mill next door?

MINISTER. Am I the—pardon me, I believe I do not understand?

SCOTTY BRIGGS (*with a sigh*). Why, you see, we are in a bit of trouble, and the boys thought maybe you would give us a lift, if we'd tackle you—that is, if I've got the rights of it, and you are the head-clerk of the doxology-works next door.

MINISTER. I am the shepherd in charge of the flock whose fold is next door.

SCOTTY BRIGGS. The which?

MINISTER. The spiritual adviser of the little company of believers whose sanctuary adjoins these premises.

SCOTTY BRIGGS (*scratching his head*). You rather

hold over me, pard. I reckon I can't call that hand. Ante and pass the buck.

MINISTER. How? I beg pardon. What did I understand you to say?

SCOTTY BRIGGS. Well, you've ruther got the bulge on me. Or maybe we've both got the bulge, somehow. You don't smoke me, and I don't smoke you. You see, one of the boys has passed in his checks, and we want to give him a good send-off; and so the thing I'm on now is to roust out somebody to jerk a little chin-music for us, and waltz him through handsome.

MINISTER. My friend, I seem to grow more and more bewildered. Your observations are wholly incomprehensible to me. Cannot you simplify them in some way? At first I thought perhaps I understood you, but I grope now. Would it not expedite matters if you restricted yourself to categorical statements of fact, unencumbered with obstructing accumulations of metaphor and allegory?

SCOTTY BRIGGS (*after a pause*). I'll have to pass, I judge.

MINISTER. How?

SCOTTY BRIGGS. You've raised me out, pard.

MINISTER. I still fail to catch your meaning.

SCOTTY BRIGGS. Why, that last lead of yours is too many for me—that's the idea. I can't neither trump nor follow suit.

(*Long pause. MINISTER perplexed, SCOTTY deep in thought.*)

SCOTTY BRIGGS. I've got it now, so's you can savvy. What we want is a gospel-sharp. See?

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MINISTER. A what?

SCOTTY BRIGGS. Gospel-sharp, parson.

MINISTER. Oh! why did you not say so before? I am a clergyman—a parson.

SCOTTY BRIGGS. Now you talk! You see my blind and straddle it like a man. Put it there! (*shaking hands*). Now we're all right, pard. Let's start fresh. Don't you mind my snuffling a little—becuz we're in a power of trouble. You see, one of the boys has gone up the flume——

MINISTER. Gone where?

SCOTTY BRIGGS. Up the flume—throwed up the sponge, you understand.

MINISTER. Thrown up the sponge?

SCOTTY BRIGGS. Yes; kicked the bucket——

MINISTER. Ah! has departed to that mysterious country from whose bourne no traveller returns.

SCOTTY BRIGGS. Return! I reckon not. Why, pard, he's *dead*!

MINISTER. Yes; I understand.

SCOTTY BRIGGS. Oh, you do? Well, I thought maybe you might be getting tangled some more. Yes, you see, he's dead again——

MINISTER. *Again?* Why, has he ever been dead before?

SCOTTY BRIGGS. Dead before? No! Do you reckon a man has got as many lives as a cat? But you bet you he's awful dead now, poor old boy, and I wish I'd never seen this day. I don't want no better friend than Buck Fanshaw. I knowed him by the back; and when I know a man and like him I freeze to him—you hear *me*.

Take him all round, pard, there never was a bullier man in the mines. No man ever knowed Buck Fanshaw to go back on a friend. But it's all up, you know, it's all up. It ain't no use, they've scooped him.

MINISTER. Scooped him?

SCOTTY BRIGGS. Yes; death has. Well, well, well we've got to give him up. Yes, indeed. It's a kind of a hard world, after all, *ain't* it? But, pard, he was a rustler! You ought to seen him get started once. He was a bully boy with a glass eye! Just spit in his face, and give him room according to his strength, and it was just beautiful to see him peel and go in. He was the worst son of a thief that ever drawed breath. Pard, he was *on* it! He was on it bigger than an Injun!

MINISTER. On it! on what?

SCOTTY BRIGGS. On the shoot. On the shoulder. On the fight, you understand. *He* didn't give a continental for *anybody*. *Beg* your pardon, friend, for coming so near saying a cuss-word; but you see I'm on an awful strain, in this palaver, on account of having to cramp down and draw everything so mild. But we've got to give him up. There ain't any getting around that, I don't reckon. Now, if we can get you to help plant him——

MINISTER. Preach the funeral discourse? Assist at the obsequies?

SCOTTY BRIGGS. Obs'quies is good. Yes, that's it; that's our little game. We are going to get the thing up regardless, you know. He was always nifty himself, and so you bet you his funeral ain't going to be no slouch—solid silver door-plate on his coffin, six plumes

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on the hearse, and a nigger on the box in a biled shirt and a plug hat—how's that for high? And we'll take care of *you*, pard. We'll fix you all right. There'll be a kerridge for you; and whatever you want, you just 'scape out, and we'll 'tend to it. We've got a shebang fixed up for you to stand behind in No. 1's house, and don't you be afraid. Just go in and toot your horn, if you don't sell a clam. Put Buck through as bully as you can, pard, for anybody that knowed him will tell you that he was one of the whitest men that was ever in the mines. You can't draw it too strong. He never could stand it to see things going wrong. He's done more to make this town quiet and peaceable than any man in it. I've seen him lick four greasers in eleven minutes, myself. If a thing wanted regulating, *he* warn't the man to go browsing around after somebody to do it, but he would prance in and and regulate it himself. He warn't a Catholic. Scasely. He was down on 'em. His word was, "No Irish need apply!" But it didn't make no difference about that when it came down to what a man's rights was—and so, when some roughs jumped the Catholic bone-yard and started in to stake out town lots in it, he *went* for 'em! And he *cleaned* 'em too! I was there, pard, and I seen it myself.

MINISTER. That was very well, indeed—at least the impulse was—whether the act was strictly defensible or not. Had deceased any religious convictions? That is to say, did he feel a dependence upon or acknowledge allegiance to a higher power?

SCOTTY BRIGGS (*after a pause*). I reckon you've

stumped me again, pard. Could you say it over once more, and say it slow?

MINISTER. Well, to simplify it somewhat, was he, or rather had he ever been connected with any organisation sequestered from secular concerns and devoted to self-sacrifice in the interests of morality?

SCOTTY BRIGGS. All down but nine; set 'em up on the other alley, pard.

MINISTER. What did I understand you to say?

SCOTTY BRIGGS. Why, you're most too many for me, you know. When you get in with your left, I hunt grass every time. Every time you draw, you fill; but I don't seem to have any luck. Let's have a new deal.

MINISTER. How? Begin again?

SCOTTY BRIGGS. That's it.

MINISTER. Very well. Was he a good man, and——

SCOTTY BRIGGS. There, I see that! Don't put up another chip till I look at my hand. A good man, says you? Pard, it ain't no name for it. He was the best man that ever—pard, you would have doated on that man. He could lam any galoot of his inches in America. It was him that put down the riot last election before it got a start; and everybody said he was the only man that could have done it. He waltzed in with a spanner in one hand and a trumpet in the other, and sent fourteen men home on a shutter in less than three minutes. He had that riot all broke up and prevented nice before anybody ever got a chance to strike a blow. He was always for peace, and he would *have* peace—he could not stand disturbances. Pard, he was a great loss to this town. It would please the boys if you could chip in something

like that, and do him justice. Here once, when the Micks got to throwing stones through the Methodis' Sunday School windows, Buck Fanshaw, all of his own notion, shut up his saloon and took a couple of six-shooters and mounted guard over the Sunday School. Says he, "No Irish need apply," and they didn't. He was the bulliest man in the mountains, pard ! He could run faster, jump higher, hit harder, and hold more tangle-foot whisky without spilling it than any man in seventeen counties. Put that in, pard ; it'll please the boys more than anything you could say. And you can say, pard, that he never shook his mother.

MINISTER. Never shook his mother ?

SCOTTY BRIGGS. That's it ; any of the boys will tell you so.

MINISTER. Well, but why *should* he shake her ?

SCOTTY BRIGGS. That's what *I* say—but some people does.

MINISTER. Not people of any repute ?

SCOTTY BRIGGS. Well, some that averages pretty so-so.

MINISTER. In my opinion the man that would offer personal violence to his own mother ought to——

SCOTTY BRIGGS. Cheese it, pard ; you've banked your ball clean outside the string. What I was a-drivin' at was, that he never *throwed off* on his mother, don't you see ? No, indeedy. He give her a house to live in, and town lots, and plenty of money ; and he looked after her and took care of her all the time ; and when she was down with the small-pox I'm d——d if he didn't set up nights and nuss her himself ! *Beg* your pardon for saying it,

but it hopped out too quick for yours truly. You've treated me like a gentleman, pard, and I ain't the man to hurt your feelings intentional. I think you're white. I think you're a square man, pard. I like you, and I'll lick any man that don't. I'll lick him till he can't tell himself from a last year's corpse. Put it *there* !
(*Shakes hands.*)

III

THE RUBICON

(Scene adapted from the dialogue of "The Rubicon," by E. F. Benson, and inserted into these papers by kind permission of the author and the publishers, Messrs. Methuen and Co.)

(Enter MRS. GRAMPOUND and LADY EVA HAYES.)

MRS. G. Oh ! my darling, what a beautiful room ! just what I pictured it would be—how very charming ! How very homely and comfortable—dear me, yes, really, exquisite. What taste you have, my love ! And those vases, what are they ? How wonderful they are !

EVA. Sit down, mother, you will be able to enjoy everything equally well sitting down. Those vases are not very valuable, though they are rare. Hayes is rather a connoisseur, but I don't like them *(handing some tea)*.

MRS. G. Thank you, dear. Your father would have come with me, but he is away with your cousin Percy. I am quite alone at home. You are looking wonderfully well, dear, and I am sure I needn't ask you whether you are happy.

EVA. Of course, those are the things that are taken for granted.

MRS. G. Ha! ha! always so amusing in your quiet way. Well, darling, I want to have a nice, cosy little talk with you.

EVA. Do.

MRS. G. The mistress of a great house like this has very great responsibilities, my darling. If dear James were not such a thoroughly able and upright man, I confess I should feel a wee bit nervous at seeing my darling whirled away into such a circle. Be very sure exactly how you are going to behave. There seems to me something very beautiful in the life of those dear last-century great ladies, whose husbands used to treat them with such charming old-fashioned courtesy, and lock them up whenever they went away, which must have been most tedious. Yes, and send a servant to tell the groom of the chambers to ask my Lady if she would receive him. Dear me, yes.

EVA. I don't think Hayes means to lock me up whenever he goes away. We haven't got a groom of the chambers either.

MRS. G. No, dear, I was just saying, wasn't I? that all that was changed. Husbands lounge in their wives' boudoirs now, and smoke cigarettes there, so different altogether to the habits in my young days, so much more human and natural. You don't mind the smell of smoke, do you, dear?

EVA. On the contrary, I smoke myself.

MRS. G. Gracious, how shocking! What a wicked child! Of course, there's no harm in it, dear. Lots

of nice women smoke; and when a difficult time comes between you—there will be difficult times, of course, my Eva, there is no rose without its thorn. Let me see, what was I saying? Ah! yes, these little indulgences, like letting a husband have a cigarette in the drawing-room, every now and then, are very much appreciated. A little womanly tenderness, a little tact, a little wifely sympathy, just a look, the “I know, I know” which Woman can put into one little look, is all that is required to make those little difficulties real advantages, concealed facilities, one might call them, renewals of the marriage vows. The rough places shall be made plain, in fact, if one may use those words.

EVA. I never thought of it in that light, I must confess. I allow smoking in my drawing-room because I like smoking myself.

MRS. G. Of course, of course, no doubt it is very soothing to the nerves. Yours must be so highly strained with all the innumerable social duties you are forced to go through—balls, parties, dinners, one after the other—oh, yes; oh, yes. And old Lady Hayes, now, does she get on with you? She lives here, doesn't she?

EVA. She is on a visit with us. Hayes used to live with his mother before our marriage, and she lives with us now.

MRS. G. Dear old Lady Hayes! such a wonderful woman, such strong, shrewd, common sense. I wonder if she will go on living with you, Eva? I don't think it is a very good plan, myself—there is sure to be a little unpleasantness now and then.

EVA. In spite of her strong, shrewd common sense?

MRS. G. Dear child, how you catch one's words up! Of course her presence would be invaluable to you if she stopped, and with such a guest constantly by you of course you would learn a great deal. But I should make it quite clear what your relative positions must be. You are the mistress of the house, Eva, she is your husband's pensioner. Be very kind, very courteous, but very firm. Your rights are your rights. I daresay she will go and live at Brighton, or Bournemouth, or Bath—all of those watering-places begin with a B. No doubt she has money of her own. You didn't think of asking Lord Hayes what would be done about that, did you, Eva? You might suggest it, very gently and feelingly, some time soon. Of course you needn't express any opinion till you see what she is likely to do. I daresay she will herself see the advisability of leaving you and Hayes alone. But if it appears that she is proposing to live with you, just say very quietly that you will be very glad to have her. That will show, I think, that you know, and are ready to insist on her occupying her proper position in the house.

EVA. I see. Let me give you another cup of tea.

MRS. G. Of course you will not do anything in a hurry.

EVA. Of course not.

MRS. G. I know how heavy the responsibilities must seem to you, as they should to every young woman who goes out from the what's-its-name of home life and all that sort of thing to these very much wider spheres—but you will do your best, dear, I know. Eva, darling, I must kiss you.

EVA. You like my marriage?

MRS. G. Eva, you know it was the dream of my life. Hayes is, to me, the ideal husband for you.

EVA. We get on admirably together, he is most considerate for me, and most kind.

MRS. G. I declare, I positively love him!—of course, in any case, I should teach myself—should compel myself—to love the man of your choice, but the first time I saw him, I said to myself, ‘That is the husband for my Eva!’ It was one June evening, and we were dining somewhere—I can’t remember where—and he was there too; dear me, I recollect it all as clearly as if it were yesterday. I remember old Lady Hayes telling us all that brown sherry was rank poison, and that she would as soon think of drinking a glass of laudanum. We all laughed a great deal, because our host had some very famous brown sherry.

EVA. That must have been very pleasant.

MRS. G. And such a well-informed man, too! He was telling me a few days before your marriage, about a flower he had in his conservatory which eats flies, or something of that sort, which seemed to me most extraordinary. They say he is an admirable landlord.

EVA. He is admirable in everything. I am glad my marriage with him gives you so much satisfaction.

MRS. G. Darling, that is so sweet of you! Ah, how can I have but one opinion! It is a girl’s duty to marry as well as she can. Yours was a brilliant match. I know so many mothers, good, conscientious mothers, who only think of their children’s happiness, who would have given anything to have had Hayes as their son-in-law.

A mother's happiness lies in the happiness of her children. They are bone of her bone, and all that sort of thing. How can she but wish and pray for their happiness? You see, Eva, you were quite poor; your father could leave you next to nothing. Riches are a great blessing, because they enable you to do so much good. Of course they are not everything, and if you had wanted to marry that dreadful Lord Symonds, whom they tell such horrible stories about, I would have fallen down on my knees and beseeched you not to mind poverty or anything else. Or if I thought you would not be happy, for it is your duty to be happy. But this was exceptional in every way. You get position, wealth, title, and a good husband. No one can deny that the aristocracy is the best class to marry into; indeed, for you it is the only class, and you brought him nothing but the love he bears you, and of course your beauty.

EVA. Yes, he paid a long price for my beauty.

MRS. G. My dear Eva, we are all given certain natural advantages—or if they are withheld, you may be sure that it is only a blessing in disguise—talents, beauty, and so forth, and it is our clear duty to make the most of them. Beauty has been given you in quite an unusual degree, and it was your duty to let it find its proper use. Don't you remember the parable of the ten talents? We had it in church one Sunday, and I remember at the time, I was thinking of you and Lord Hayes, which was quite a remarkable coincidence, and then the good you can do as Lady Hayes is infinitely greater than the good you could have done as the wife of a poor man. You have to look at the practical side of

things too. Ah! dear me, if life were only love, how simple and delightful it would all be! This is a work-a-day world, and we are not sent here just to enjoy ourselves.

EVA. There were certainly excellent reasons for my marrying Lord Hayes. I like and respect him very much, and he is always agreeable and considerate.

MRS. G. This is the best and surest basis for love to rest on. That is just what I have always said. Love must spring out of these things, just as the leaves and foliage of a tree spring out of the solid wood. So many girls have such foolish sentimental notions, just as if they had come away from a morning performance at the Adelphi. That is not love, it is just silly school-girl sentimentality, which silly school-girls feel for tenor singers and slim, weak-eyed young men. Real love is the flower of respect and admiration and solid esteem. "Aimer, c'est tout comprendre" and to do that you must have no illusions, you must keep the light dry, you must regard a man as he is, not as you think he is.

EVA. I daresay you are right. I certainly never felt any school-girl sentimentality for any one—least of all for Hayes—but he is a very good and excellent husband.

MRS. G. Ah, Eva, you cannot think what balm that is to me. And so you went to Algiers, did you not, on your honeymoon?

EVA. Yes, it is a very pretty place.

MRS. G. Darling, why do you tell me so little? I have been thinking so continuously about you all the time you have been away; you have lived in all my thoughts. I have said to myself, "Eva will be at home

in four weeks, three weeks, two days, one day, to-day I shall see my dearest again."

EVA. What is there to tell you? You assume that I am happy, and I don't deny it. I am also amused and interested in my new life, though you do say that we are not sent here to enjoy ourselves. I find things very entertaining. What is there to tell you; let me see. I lost two thousand francs at Monte Carlo.

MRS. G. Good heavens! How dreadful, my dear! Don't let Hayes know that.

EVA. Oh, he knows!—he had to pay! He is very generous about money matters, and he has the further requirement of being very rich. He is bent on my being magnificent—and so, for the matter of that, am I. You shall see some fine things another day. I have, as you have already told me, great natural advantages in the way of beauty. Diamonds suit me very well. I have a quantity of diamonds.

MRS. G. Eva, Eva, tell me you are satisfied. You don't blame me, do you, for urging it on you?

EVA. Why should I blame you? Surely I ought to be grateful to you. But to speak quite frankly, I did not marry to please you, I married to please myself—and Hayes, of course.

MRS. G. Of course.

EVA. You look tired.

MRS. G. Do I, dear? I think the excitement and anticipation of seeing you again has tired me. I came up this morning quite early, you know, and was so disappointed to find you gone out to lunch; but, of course, I know all that is part of your life.

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EVA (*handing list*). These are my engagements for the next five weeks.

MRS. G. Heavens! How will you get through it all?

EVA. I snatch an hour or two of rest when I can. I should probably be lying down now, if you were not here.

MRS. G. Dear me, how very thoughtless of me, of course!

EVA. Don't go, mother. I did not mean to drive you away.

MRS. G. But I must go, my train—— I did bring my bag with me, thinking perhaps——

EVA. Stay, by all means, if you wish; but we have a dinner here, and two receptions afterwards, if our guests leave early enough. We shouldn't be back till I don't know when at night. You will be much more comfortable at home.

MRS. G. Oh yes, I quite see that, darling.

EVA. We can arrange another time for you to stay with us, in about six weeks; but then, I think, we shall be going to Scotland. I don't remember, I'll let you know.

MRS. G. Perhaps you could come down with Hayes to us, to the old home, couldn't you?

EVA. Oh, that's all very vague. I'll write to you what my plans are. I can't say, on the impulse of the moment. I am awfully sorry to hurry you away; but trains are inconsiderate things, they won't stop in the station for any one, will they? Give my love to father. Next time you come you must bring him—don't forget. Ah, there is Lady Hayes. My mother is hurrying away to catch the train back to Summerlands. Good-

bye, dearest. Fleming will see you into the cab. I won't come down. Lady Hayes will do the honours of the house. I never interfere, do I? Goodbye, darling.

Looking at her watch.) Quarter to five—we dine at eight. I wonder how long it will take Lady Hayes to pack. I wish it was colder in the month of June. The heat is very trying when one has so much to do. How hideous those vases are! I never noticed them before; I must have them removed. Poor dear mother, how inconsequent she always is! I do hope she won't often take it into her head to drop down on me and spend the day; so dreadfully tiring to her, and such useless fatigue.

(Enter LADY HAYES. She speaks with a Scotch accent.)
Ah, there you are! Have you had tea?

LADY H. No.

EVA. I'm afraid this is cold—let me ring for some more.

LADY H. I can do without. The servants have quite enough to do with the dinner to-night, without bringing up tea twice over.

EVA. Ah, that is so thoughtful and charming of you. The merciful man considers his beast. That is so good of you.

LADY H. And he considers his servants as well.

EVA. Oh, I think servants are meant to be classed as a sort of beast. The good ones are machines with volition—and if they are bad servants, of course they are beasts.

LADY H. Your mother went rather early.

EVA. Her train is early.

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LADY H. I think she might have been asked to stay.

EVA. Dear lady, she might have stayed without being asked. She is my mother, and is welcome to go, or stay here as she pleases.

LADY H. As I do, I suppose you intend to infer.

EVA. Do let me ring for some tea (*smiling*).

LADY H. No, thank you.

EVA. Well, let me see if there isn't a cup still in the pot (*whistles*).

LADY H. I don't know if it is customary for women to whistle nowadays, but in my time it was thought most improper.

EVA. Improper! How odd! Isn't there a French proverb—I daren't pronounce French before you—about "We have changed all that"? That is a very silly proverb. It is the older generation who changed it themselves. They made their own system of life impossible. They reduced it to an absurdity.

LADY H. I confess I don't understand you. No doubt I am very stupid. I should like very much to know how we have reduced our life to an absurdity?

EVA. I don't say the modern generation are not quite as absurd, but the difference is that they have not yet learned their absurdity. You see, the whole race of men, since B.C. 4004—that is the correct date, is it not?—have been devoting themselves to the construction of any theory of life which would hold water, and one by one they have been abandoned. The new theory that nothing matters at all has not yet been disproved, and considering that no theory hitherto has ever been permanent, it would be absurd to abandon this one till it

has been disproved in as convincing a manner as all its predecessors.

LADY H. I imagine that no previous age has ever sunk so deep in mere sensuous gratification.

EVA. Ah, do you think so? Of course, it is impertinent in me to try to argue the matter with you, as experience is the only safe guide in such matters, and you have experience of at least one generation more than I. But that seems to me altogether untrue. The men of your generation, for instance, and the generation before, drank so much port wine that this generation drink none. The daily three bottles that our grandfathers and great-grandfathers indulged in have satisfied the desire for port to the uttermost. No one gets drunk now. I don't think I ever saw a man drunk. They used to fall under the table, did they not? What a charming state of things! But it has at least produced a fastidiousness in us which considers heavy drinking coarse and low.

LADY H. My father was a teetotaler and so was my husband.

EVA. I think that the habit of drinking in men is really the fault of the women. You, of course, are an instance in point. Your husband was a teetotaler, surely through your influence. If the men of the last generation were vile, the women, I think, were viler still. But perhaps I am wrong.

LADY H. It is easy to speak lightly of your forefathers, but at least they had some virtues which you and your present generation seem to ignore.

EVA. Ah! you misunderstand me. Heaven forbid

that I should speak lightly of them. Their virtues were gigantic. They used to go to church with the most appalling regularity every Sunday morning; of course they made up for it by having a little quiet cock-fighting on Sunday afternoon, but you cannot expect perfection.

LADY H. Cock-fighting improved the breed—and it is no more brutal than butchering hand-reared pheasants.

EVA. You surprise me. I watched them shooting last year at home. The hand-reared pheasants came over the guns at the height of about 60 feet at forty miles an hour. Hayes was there. He missed seventeen birds in succession. Certainly Hayes' butchery of hand-reared pheasants was a most humane proceeding. Did you ever see a cock-fight?

LADY H. Certainly not.

EVA. Another cup of tea? You would have done much better to have some made fresh for you. I wonder when the absurd custom of women pouring out tea will go out; why a woman should have that abominable trouble I cannot think. Of course when tea was rather a rarity, a sort of up-to-date luxury, it was natural. The hostess gave her guests a smart little present.

LADY H. It used to be held to be the province of women to be matronly and womanly and domestic. They were in their places at the fireside, at the tea-table, not in the smoking-room and in grand stands.

EVA. I am referring to the manual labour of pouring out tea; but whatever the province of women may be, they seem to me to fill it very inadequately when their husbands go to bed drunk every night. It is such a comfort to know that your father and husband were

teetotalers, for I can say these things without their being personal. Your father was a Presbyterian minister, was he not? How do you call it in the dear Scotch language—meenister, isn't it?

LADY H. He was a learned, upright man.

EVA. I always like the Scotch so much. They are so honest, and sterling, and serious. Hoots mon! After our dreadfully keen encounter, I want soothing. Argument is very trying to the nerves. Tobacco, on the other hand, is eminently soothing. Permit me to soothe myself. Of course I know how utterly you must disapprove of me.

LADY H. I was brought up to believe in moral responsibility, to have and accept duties; you were not.

EVA. Quite so. Some of us still have a kind of genius for doing our duty, but doing one's duty is an unremunerative occupation in this wicked world. Of course, you have constructed a place and appointed a time for the just balance to be struck. You have made a Paradise and an Inferno for us.

LADY H. Do you mean to say that you deny the existence of ——

EVA. Ah! my dear lady, I deny nothing and I affirm nothing.

LADY H. You believe nothing—you fear nothing—you love nothing; all you care for are your wretched little hair-splittings and the modern view of life. When you call my beliefs superstitions and inventions you think you have annihilated them.

EVA. Excuse me. I have no wish to annihilate them nor do I pretend to do so. I wish I shared them. It

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must make everything so very easy if it is labelled right or wrong; a sort of cross-road, with a sign-post, "Heaven and Hell."

LADY H. It is quite in character with your generation to ridicule the most sacred beliefs of others, but I should have thought any code of good manners would have forbid that.

EVA. I quite agree with you in all you say about good manners, there we *are* your inferiors. The urbanity of your date is so much more noticeable than with us. For instance, I must remind you that we dine at eight, and we have neither of us much time to dress in. There is a brusqueness in my methods of putting an end to a conversation that is so obviously distasteful to us both which you, of your generation, would never have been guilty of.

LADY H. What Hayes could have seen in you passes my comprehension.

EVA. I beg your pardon?

LADY H. Of course I will do him the justice to say you are changed since the day when I first saw you sitting in your father's garden.

EVA. Oh! I see, yes. I have found myself suddenly transplanted from a silent, pleasant garden to a crowded reception-hall. My tastes did not lie in gardens, they seemed to me monotonous. But there is nothing so inexplicable as the phenomenon called "The Rage."

LADY H. The rage, indeed!

EVA. The Opera screamed and starved unheard of for years in London, when suddenly the whole of London became aware that it was the most delicious thing in the

world. It had been there all the time ; it was advertised in the morning papers, but nobody cared. In the same way with me. I was living before, apart from the time I was sitting in my father's garden. I had been advertised at balls and concerts, but the advertisement had been entirely unremunerative. Then a middle-aged peer (forgive my speaking of your son in these terms) had remarked that Miss Grampound seemed to him worthy of the highest compliment that a man can pay a woman, with the consequence that all London was of one mind that she was exactly what they had been looking for so long. My head is not turned, nor, perhaps, is my heart very seriously touched ; but the result is that I have become conscious of myself and conscious of other people. I am sensitively conscious of your disapprobation, and wish I could alter it ; but it is hand-in-hand with your old-world ideas of womanly and unwomanly. Now confess, you think me terribly unwomanly.

LADY H. I think you are totally unfitted to be the wife of my son.

EVA. I think you are wrong, but you know his character so thoroughly. I should have hardly thought, however, he had reached the standard of Scotch perfection that you were accustomed to in your father and husband ; but—I—fancy even he is Scotch enough to choose a wife by himself without reference to your approval or disapproval.

LADY H. Thank you, but that does not make me approve of his choice the more for that.

EVA. Do you know, I really haven't time to discuss the matter any further ; we dine at eight, as I said before.

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LADY H. You may dine at whatever hour you please. I shall not dine.

EVA. Not dine? Are you ill?

LADY H. I cannot sit down to table with you. You have offended me grossly, disgracefully. Do you know whose house this is?

EVA. Yes, distinctly mine (*pause*).

LADY H. You need say no more. I completely understand ye——

EVA. That we dine at eight and shall be glad of your company then with our other guests.

LADY H. I certainly shall not be one of your guests to-night nor any time in the future. I am going out of this house for ever. (*Eva ringing the bell.*) This is only part of your systematic method of insulting me. Ye've done it ever since I've known ye.

EVA. Surely you are over-sensitive.

LADY H. I never knew that over-sensitiveness had ever been my failing, but I am much obliged to you for pointing it out to me. However there is one point which I must beg to differ with you. This is not your house, it is my son's. It has belonged to him for generations.

EVA. Undoubtedly, but your son's house is not an hotel. We do not keep a table d'hôte for our guests. If you are ill you shall have your meals in your own room; if not, there is one dinner, and that is served at eight.

LADY H. I have never been dictated to in my life.

EVA. A very sound principle to go on with in life. Where shall your luggage be sent on to?

LADY H. You need not trouble. I will take it with me.

EVA. I will send Parkins to pack for you.

LADY H. I am obliged to you, my own maid can attend to me.

EVA. As you please. I thought Parkins would be quicker, for I presume you are going before dinner.

LADY H. I am going at once, and shall never cross your threshold again.

EVA. No? Hayes will be sorry.

LADY H. Hayes will live to be *very* sorry.

EVA. I am sure he will. Leave your address with Fleming that your letters may be forwarded.

LADY H. I *will* leave my address with Fleming.

EVA. Thank you, goodbye. (*Exit LADY H.*) Those vases are hideous. How could Hayes have got them! (*Yawns.*) A cup of tea in my own room will be very nice. What tiresome mothers Hayes and I have to be sure!

IV

EXCERPT FROM "BILLY"

BY PAUL METHVEN

JERRY. And I love you.

BILLY. That I do not believe. I suppose I oughtn't to have said that. I suppose I ought to have appeared deeply moved, and offered to be a sister to you?

JERRY. I am already provided with a sister.

BILLY. I know, and she is exceedingly anxious that you should marry me. Really your deference to her wishes reflects tremendous credit on you—as a brother.

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JERRY. I say, you know, you needn't chaff a fellow like that. You won't have me, and you've said so, and I suppose that's the end of it, and——

BILLY. And we needn't sit out the rest of this dance? But why not? I'm enjoying myself immensely in your company, and I shall think you awfully rude if you don't say you're doing the same in mine.

JERRY. Well, Miss Holroyd——

BILLY. Oh, call me Billy. Every one calls me Billy—that is to say, every one I like.

JERRY. Then you do——

BILLY. Of course I do. Otherwise I shouldn't have come to this out of the way part of the house with you. I should think this old room must have seen some love-making in its time—real love-making, I mean.

JERRY. It has. That's why I brought you here. We always propose in this room.

BILLY. We?

JERRY. The family in general.

BILLY. Really? Is it also a family custom to invite the intended victim for a visit, give a dance, drag her up to a lonely turret and offer her the alternative of marriage or being cast over the battlements?

JERRY. You must admit that I haven't suggested that alternative.

BILLY. No,—I'm disappointed. I don't feel that I've had my money's worth.

BILLY. So you always propose here, do you? If it's not a rude question, how many times have you done so already?

JERRY. Oh, I—why, never before. This is my maiden effort.

BILLY. I being the maiden?

JERRY. Exactly. You can't think what a fearful effort I had to make, in order to screw my courage up to the point. I couldn't eat any dinner, and I have been avoiding you ever since.

BILLY. Well, aren't you relieved now?

JERRY. Well, do you know, in a sense I am. As a matter of fact, I——

BILLY. Didn't want to propose to me at all.

JERRY. Not exactly that.

BILLY. Well, didn't want to propose to any one at all?

JERRY. That's more like it. I say, what a wonderful girl you are to have guessed that! You read me like a book.

BILLY. No, but I think I understand. You see, I'm not like most girls; they're keen on marriage. I'm not. I prefer golf and tennis.

JERRY. Don't you want to marry?

BILLY. Not a bit—at least not like other people. I want to be perfectly free and independent, and able to do what I like. Of course, the worst of being a girl is, that one can't—I ought to have been born a boy.

JERRY. You'd make a splendid boy.

BILLY. Well, I like golf, I'm never ill, if people swear I don't blush, and if they smoke I don't cough.

JERRY. You don't swear or smoke yourself?

BILLY. No, but I should if I wanted to.

JERRY. Well, may I smoke?

BILLY. Of course.

JERRY. Blanche will be awfully annoyed when she hears you've chucked me. She'll be furious.

BILLY. My dear man, it's better to be made uncomfortable for half an hour by your sister than for the rest of your existence by your wife. If I was a man, I should never marry.

JERRY. But I have to think of the family tree.

BILLY. Oh, I should let the family tree go hang. Marriage, in my opinion, is on a wrong basis altogether; two people are tied together for the avowed purpose of devoting themselves to each other for the rest of their lives, whereas they would get along very comfortably indeed if they devoted themselves—to themselves.

JERRY. In other words, minded their own business.

BILLY. Quite. In fact, that is an ideal marriage—two people completely independent of each other's control, living in the same house, of course, seeing each other every day, being excellent pals, but never interfering with each other's actions.

JERRY. And what about family ties?

BILLY. Oh, you must leave them out, of course. They spoil the whole thing. Family ties have a nasty habit of developing into family knots.

JERRY. I like your idea awfully, about being pals and nothing more.

BILLY. You see the advantage of my system is that there's no disillusionment; there can't be, because there's nothing to get disillusioned about. Marriage, as it exists, is founded on fiction, and the fiction is, that you're going to sacrifice yourself for the benefit of the

well-beloved. Just wait till the well-beloved gets on a bit in life, and wants a set of false teeth and a toupet; then you begin to realise that burnt-offerings are a smoky and over-rated form of amusement after all.

JERRY. I can't say that the mutual sacrifice theory has ever appealed to me very strongly, but it sounds awfully selfish to say so.

BILLY. Not a bit. It's common sense. Sacrifice means making yourself miserable. Mutual sacrifice means two people making themselves miserable in order that they may make each other happy. Isn't it much better that they should make themselves happy in order that neither of them should be miserable?

JERRY. You ought to start a school for modern matrimonial education.

BILLY. It's a good idea, but I am afraid that I shouldn't get many pupils. You see, nearly every one I've met seems to want a marriage for love—only they don't want to do the loving.

JERRY. Most people regard marriage as a kind of conjuring trick.

BILLY. Whereas it ought to be a mere business arrangement, a partnership with a distinctly limited liability.

JERRY. You know, you're a most surprising person. I've never heard you talk like this before. I feel almost inclined to make a confession to you.

BILLY. Please do. Go on.

JERRY. It sounds awfully rude, I know, but I really didn't want you to accept me. I had to propose to some one. My people are always worrying me to marry,

and—to tell you the truth—I felt it would be safer to propose to some one who I was sure wouldn't have me, than to some one who possibly would.

BILLY. Oh! how splendid! I think that was awfully clever of you. Go on.

JERRY. So I proposed, but I didn't want you to accept me, any more than I want any one else to. The very idea of marriage appals me. I want to be let alone; allowed to go about my own business. I collect fossils, you know; that's my hobby, not matrimony.

BILLY. I've got a maiden aunt—she's about eighty—I'd better introduce you to her. She'd just about suit you.

JERRY. Oh, no, as a wife she'd be too old, and as a fossil she'd be much too young. However, as I was saying, I don't want to marry at all. I don't mind proposing at intervals, to keep the family quiet; that is to say, always providing it's quite safe.

BILLY. You seem to have had extraordinary confidence in me?

JERRY. Well, I had; but I was a bit nervous all the same.

BILLY. I wish I'd said "yes"; it would have been lovely to see your face.

JERRY. I am very glad you didn't, for then we shouldn't have had this jolly talk.

BILLY. It has been jolly, hasn't it?

JERRY. Rather! I never knew we hit it off so well. It's really rather quaint that I, who don't want to marry any one, should propose to a girl who doesn't want to marry any one either.

BILLY. It is a bit, especially as we shall both apparently have to marry somebody some day.

JERRY. Why both?

BILLY. Well, you on account of the family tree you referred to; and I because it means more freedom.

JERRY. I thought you considered marriage slavery.

BILLY. Oh, that depends on the man; I shall find something tame one of these days. Meanwhile, we had better go downstairs,

JERRY. I suppose we had; we've been here a deuce of a time. O Lord! do you know, it's half-past one? We've been here over an hour! What on earth will they think?

BILLY. They'll think we're engaged.

JERRY. You mean my sister?

BILLY. And my people.

JERRY. Do they know?

BILLY. Don't they! I'm in just as big a mess as you are. I shall have quite as bad a time as you will; worse; because you can slang your sister, and a girl can't slang her people.

JERRY. What shall you say is the reason that kept you up here?

BILLY. Why, that you were trying to throw me over the battlements because I wouldn't marry you as per programme.

JERRY. I say, Billy!

BILLY. What is it?

JERRY. I've got a splendid idea; I can't imagine why I didn't think of it before. We've both got the same views about marriage, we've both got to marry

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some one some day, there'll be an awful row if we don't marry each other—let's do it in self-defence.

BILLY. Marriage isn't a crime yet.

JERRY. But why not do it? Marry, I mean, on a sound business basis and all that sort of thing? We'll draw it up like a state treaty, if you like, "the high contracting parties hereby agree that they will never never never world without end mind each other's business, but will strictly attend to their own."

BILLY. Do you mean it seriously?

JERRY. Rather.

BILLY. No control over each other's actions?

JERRY. Quite so.

BILLY. What about family ties?

JERRY. That's answered by the answer to the previous question as Cabinet Ministers say.

BILLY. Right O! I'm game.

JERRY. That's great. This is marriage on real Free Trade principles—we've always been Free Traders in my family.

BILLY. Now let's go and tell our people.

JERRY. Certainly, but—oughtn't we to sign, seal, and deliver the bargain somehow?

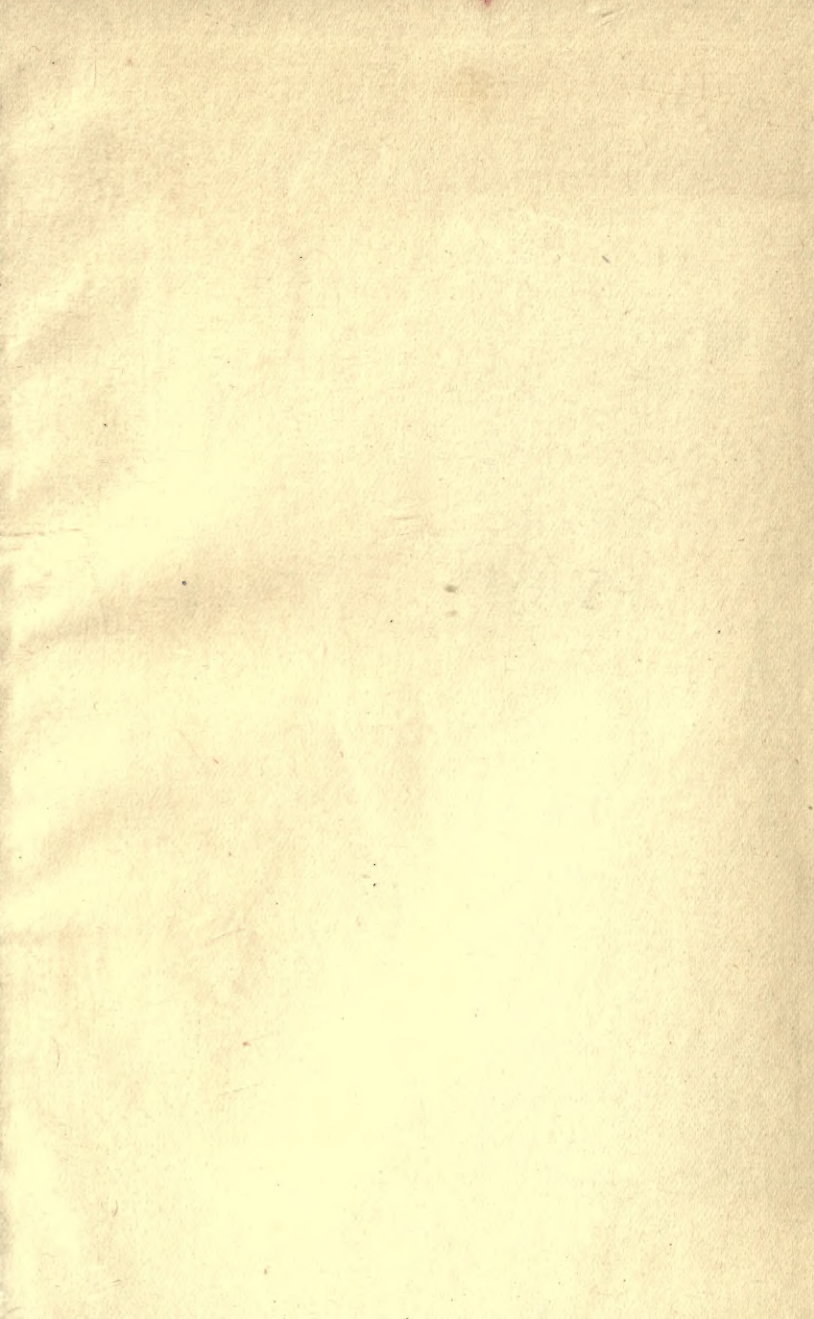
BILLY. How do you suggest doing it?

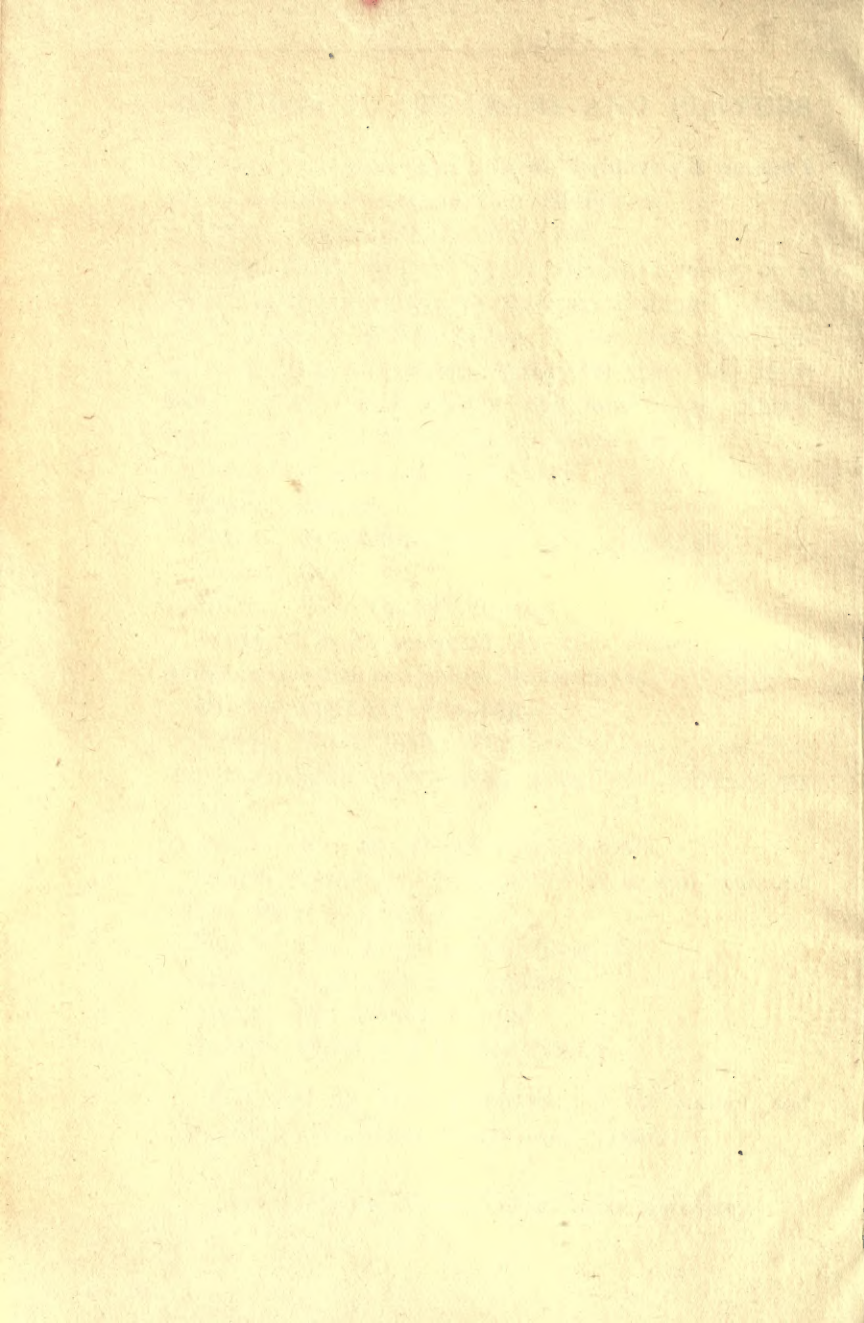
JERRY. Well, what about a kiss?

BILLY. Oh! kissing's barred.

JERRY. Thank God for that (*aside*).

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Hints to speakers and players.

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